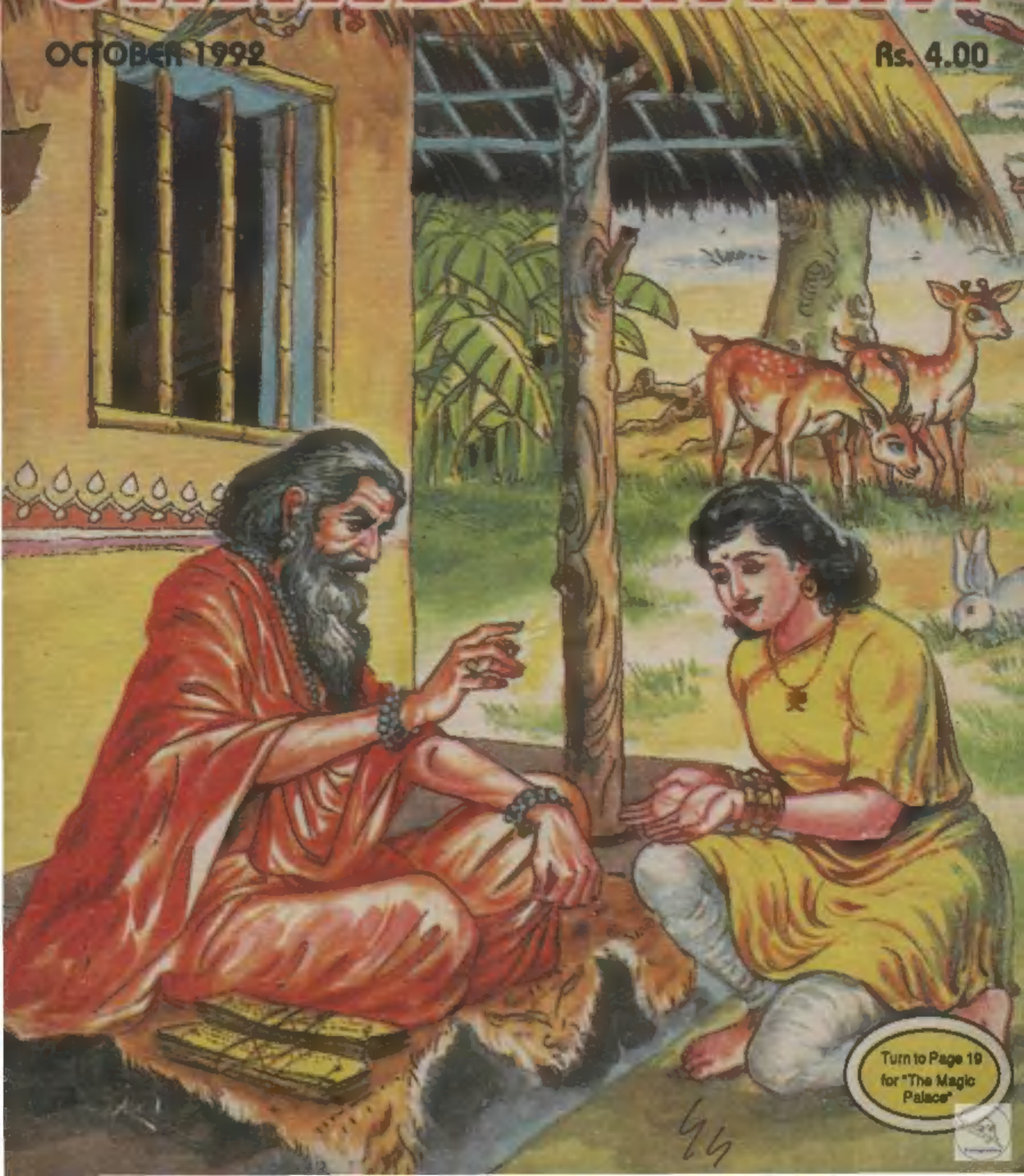


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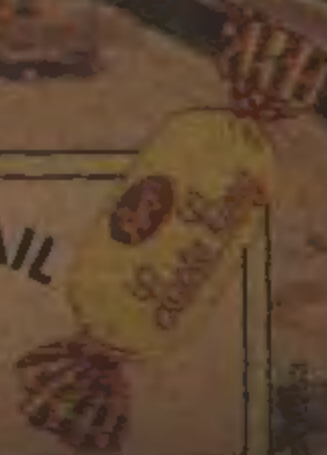
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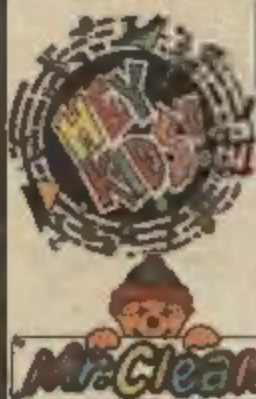
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**And News Flash, Let Us Know
and More!**

NEXT ISSUE

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THE MAGIC PALACE: The gate-keeper at the palatial mansion situated on the peak of the mountain allows Mahendranath to stay with him, though he is not quite sure whether his gesture would be approved of by his master. The flurry of activity all over the place makes the young man guess that the master of the place has returned. He mingles among the servants. Will it help him in his mission to reach the missing princess?

VEER HANUMAN: Kumbhakarna gets ready for battle at the behest of his brother Ravana. He, too, makes a vain bid to persuade Ravana to send back Sita so as to save Lanka and its people. But Ravana spurns all such advice, and Kumbhakarna offers to go to the battle-field alone. However much they try, the Vanaras are unable to overcome Kumbhakarna. Who will now take on this mighty warrior?

ALSO the new features **INDIA THROUGH HER LITERATURE** and **MOTHER EARTH**, plus all other regular features and **PANCHATANTRA**.

Printed by B.V. REDDI at Prasad Process Private Ltd, 188 N.S.K. Salai, Madras 600 026 (India) and published by B. VISWANATHA REDDI on behalf of CHANDAMAMA PUBLICATIONS, Chandamama Buildings, Vadapalani, Madras 600 026 (India). The stories, articles and designs contained herein are the exclusive property of the publishers and copying or adapting them in any manner will be dealt with according to law.



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CHAKRAPANI

WHY WARS CONTINUE

"All killing is bad for one who is filled with love. He will not need to kill. He will not kill."

This pithy statement was made by none else than Mahatma Gandhi 75 years ago, in one of his letters to an English lady married to an Indian—Esther Menon.

The First World War was on, and Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi had by then left South Africa, where he led the Indian settlers to fight against the white imperialism, and was back in Gujarat contemplating how he could lead the nation to end the Englishman's repressive and oppressive rule in India.

Gandhiji took the analogy of a snake and said if anybody is filled with pity for the snake, he will not fear it and will also not kill it, and the snake will neither hurt him. "This state of innocence is the one we must reach. It seems to me to be impossible for nations to reach it. Equal progress in all is an inconceivable situation. Nations will, therefore, always fight. A nation to be in the right can only fight with soul force."

How true have Gandhiji's words become! There is a wide gap between the rich and poor nations, between the rich and poor people. That is why the world had to suffer a second great war and witness many more wars of less magnitude. And wars still continue.

Let us remember Gandhiji on his birth anniversary (October 2) and pray that nations will fight only with their soul force.

New Peace Moves in West Asia

The prospects of a settlement of the vexatious West Asia problem have brightened ever since the Labour Party came back to power in Israel after the Likud Party had governed the country undisturbed for 15 long years.

In the elections to the 120-seat Knesset (Israel's Parliament) held in June, Labour romped home with 47 seats against the 33 won by the ruling Likud. The Meretz with 12 seats helped Labour to secure a working majority and form a government. Two Arab parties, which won five seats, also assured support to the Labour.

Thus, the Labour leader, Mr. Yitzhak Rabin, became the new "Rosh mem Sha-lah", ending the 15 year-old rule by Mr. Yitzhak Shamir of the Likud, which witnessed acts of savagery against the hapless Palestinians. The exit of the self-perpetuating



Likud was, therefore, considered the harbinger of peace among the Israelis and Palestinians.

Mr. Rabin was born 70 years ago in Jerusalem. His parents were immigrants from Eastern Europe who moved to Palestine. He is thus the only genuine "sabrah" or someone born in what is now called Israel, among all Israeli Prime Ministers—a point that might have gone in his favour. After his studies in an Agricultural School, young Rabin joined the Palmach, one of the fighting units of the Jewish underground. After Israel became independent he enrolled in the Israel Defence Forces and rose to the position of Chief of Staff. In 1968, he was sent to the U.S.A. as ambassador. On his return to national politics after five years, he was Labour's Prime Minister from 1974 to 1977. During the

Likud-Labour Coalition, he was Defence Minister from 1984 till the power-sharing arrangement between the two parties collapsed in 1990. The Labour leader then was Mr. Shimon Peres, whom Mr. Rabin defeated in the party elections in February this year to become shadow-Prime Minister.

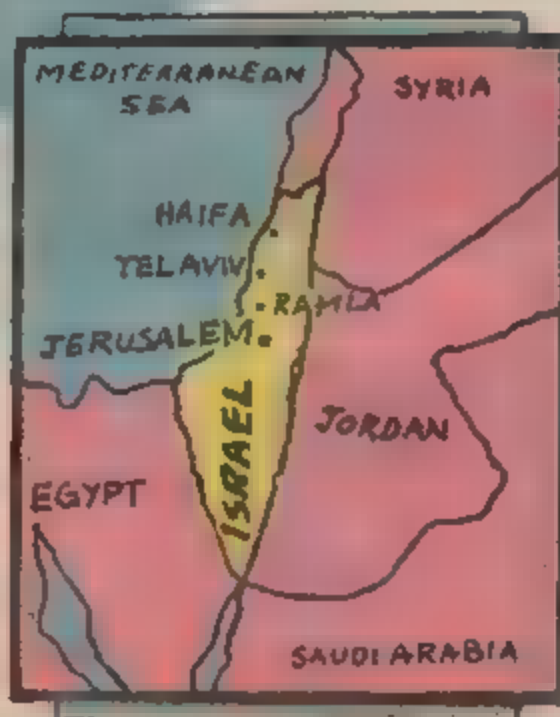
The emergence of ■ new regime is expected to be more responsive to ensuring lasting peace in West Asia by offering ■ fair deal to the Palestinians uprooted from their motherland. An indication to this came from Mr. Rabin himself when he promised, in ■ speech broadcast on radio and TV, to focus on meeting social needs by changing the national priorities. This can be done only by spending less on Jewish Settlements in the territories occupied by Israel. This means a loosening of Israel's stranglehold on these territories.

Mr. Rabin started well by inviting the Arab leaders like the King of Jordan, and the Presidents of Lebanon and Syria

to Jerusalem for talks. He followed this up by ■ all building activity in the occupied territories. Next, he flew down to Cairo to meet the Egyptian President, Mr. Hosni Mubarak, who had refused to meet Prime Minister Shamir whom he had described as "not committed to Arab-Israeli negotiations". The two agreed that it was time to move ahead for peace in West Asia.

Meanwhile, the Palestine Liberation Organisation has demanded ■ complete halt to all settlement building in the occupied territories and Israel's withdrawal from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip from where the Palestinians were driven out nearly 25 years ago. The PLO leader, Mr. Yasser Arafat, went ■ step further by announcing his willingness to meet Prime Minister Rabin.

The next round of West Asia peace talks are scheduled to be held in Washington when the new peace overtures by Israel will be keenly awaited by the countries and groups sitting around the negotiating table.



"So I Heard!"

Whenever anyone went to the Zamindar of Sirohi in search of a job, he would insist on their answering his questions correctly. Then only they were engaged for work. One day, Sahadev approached him for a job. The Zamindar was not aware that the man was deaf.

"What can be earned again even if you were to lose it once?" the Zamindar tested him. Sahadev had a ready answer, "Money." "What's it that you can't retrieve if you were to lose it once?" was the second question. "Day and night," replied Sahadev. "How long will I remain obliged to someone who has helped him?" asked the Zamindar a third time. "As long as one is alive," said Sahadev in answer.

The Zamindar was quite satisfied with Sahadev's replies and employed him. The very next day he realised that the man was deaf! He called him and asked, "How did you manage to answer all my questions so correctly?"

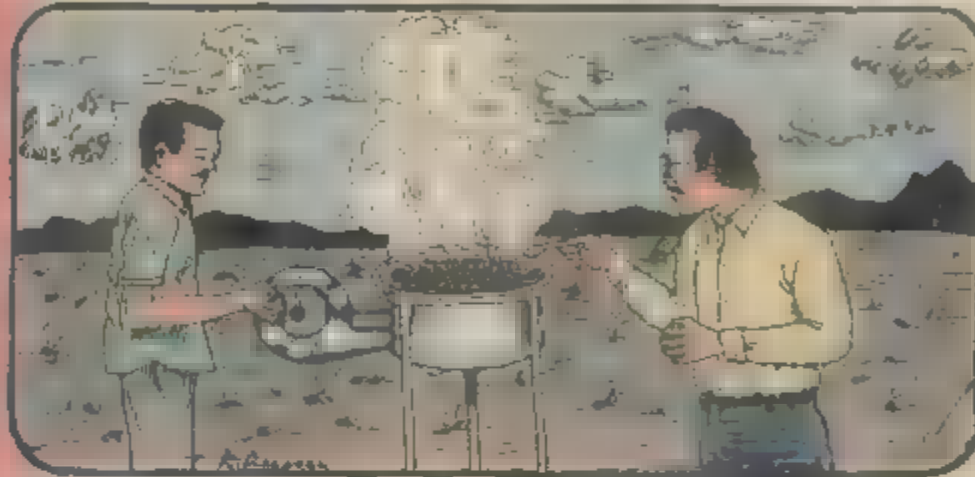
"No doubt, I heard all your questions properly. You asked me, 'What do you want?' and I replied, 'Money'. You then asked me, 'When will you work?' and I said, 'Day and Night'. Your next question was, 'How long will you work for me?' And I said, 'Till I'm alive.'"

The Zamindar cursed himself. "You're really terrible! Don't tell me you heard me like that!" But he said that with a smile on his lips.



Artificial Rain

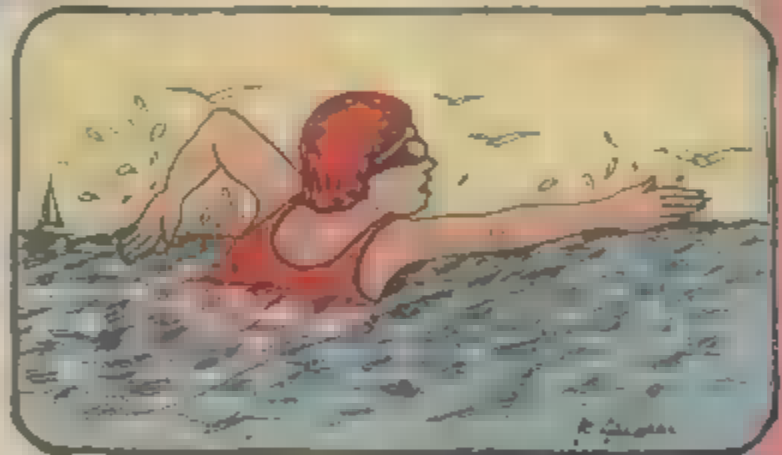
The Kutch region in Gujarat experienced heavy showers in July as a result of an experiment in cloud-seeding conducted in as many as 27 locations. Called 'Project Raindrop', the experiment involved blowing of silver iodide into scorching coal. The reaction led to evaporation and when it reached the clouds, it resulted in rain. The experiment's success depended very much on certain ideal conditions, like sufficient formation of clouds in the region, temperature within a particular range,



and a specific humidity. The effect of cloud-seeding is claimed to last nearly four days. Some devotees would certainly have extended their help to the experiment by worshipping Lord Indra and requesting him to send his Indradhanush (lightning). The possibility not been entirely ruled out.

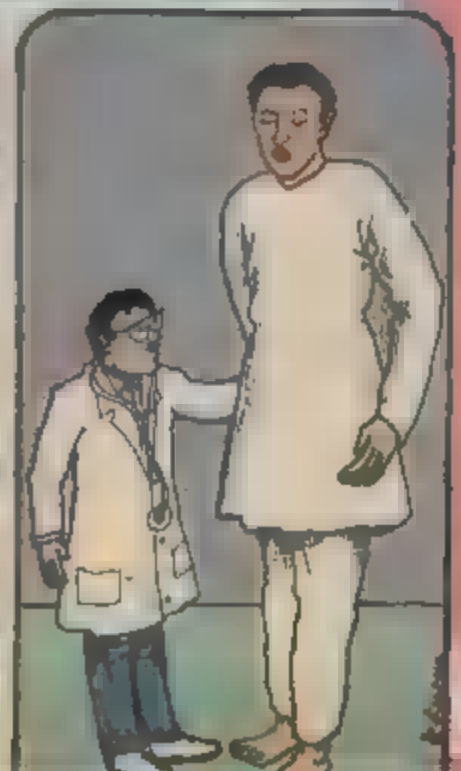
Channel-swimming Record

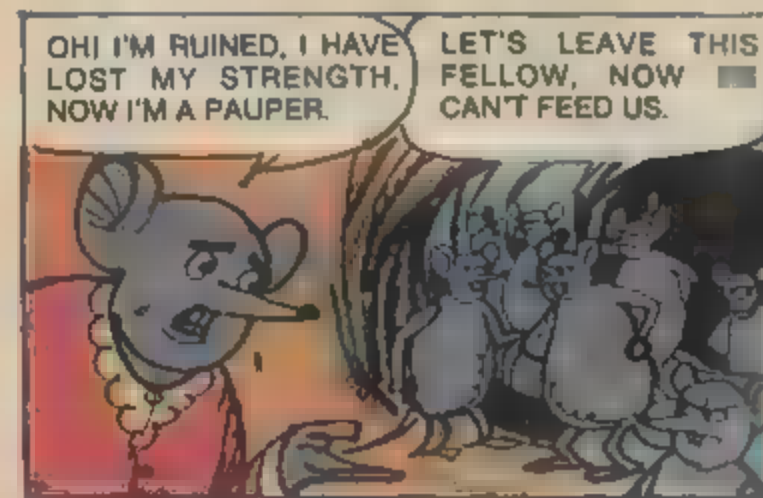
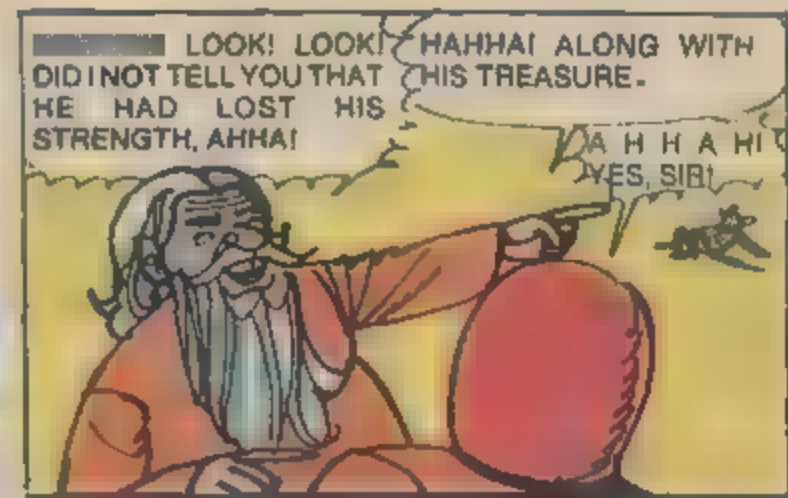
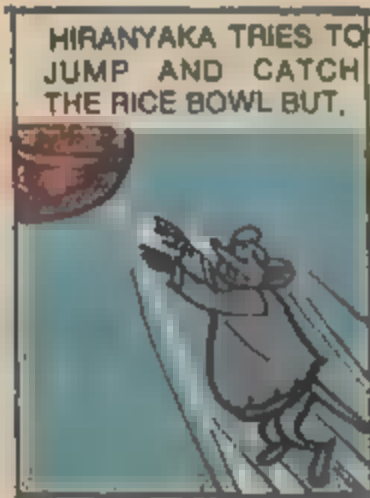
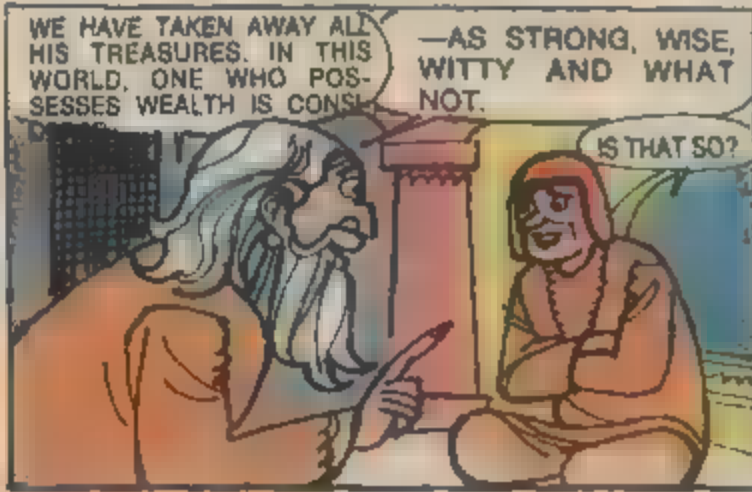
We recently read about some blind trekkers climbing to a record height. Here's another record by a handicapped woman. Janaki, a bank employee in Bangalore, is a severe paraplegic and generally around in a wheelchair. On July 29, she swam the turbulent English Channel, from Shakespeare Beach in England to Wissant in France—a distance of 37 km. She began her training in a swimming pool in Bangalore, and went on to practise sea-swimming in Malpe beach where, within a week, she swam to St. Mary's Islands 7 km away. She followed a three-week training in Malpe by a five-week acclimatization in Shakespeare Beach. "It is a dream come true!" remarked Janaki as she came out of the water. She now awaits an entry in the Guinness Book.



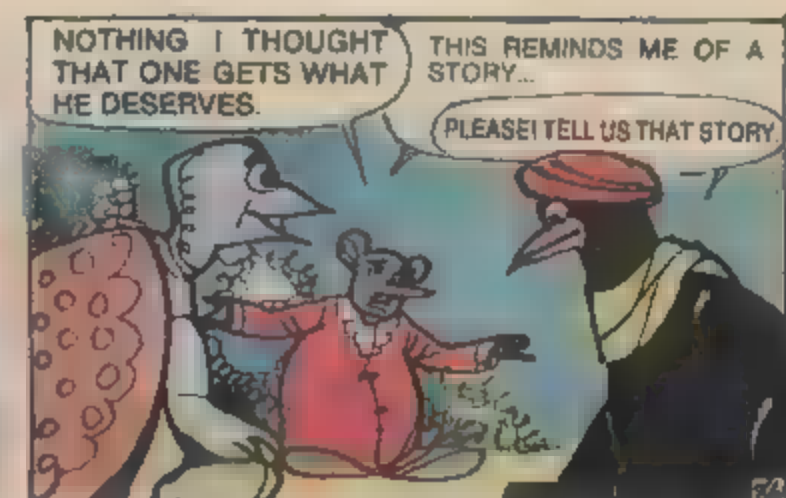
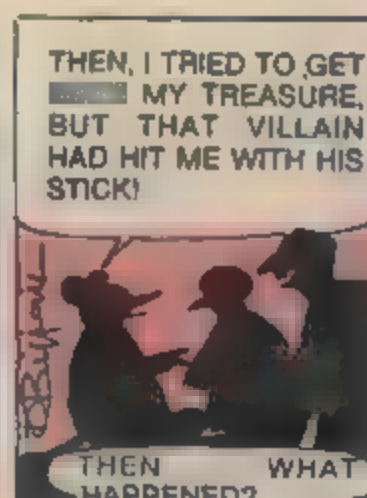
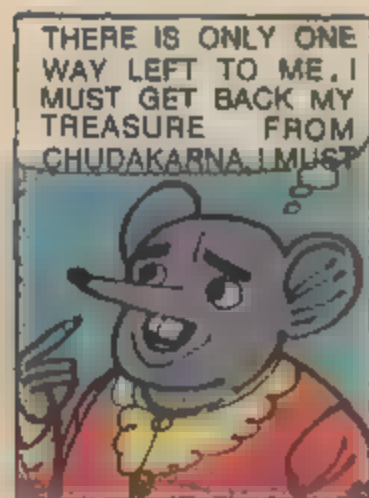
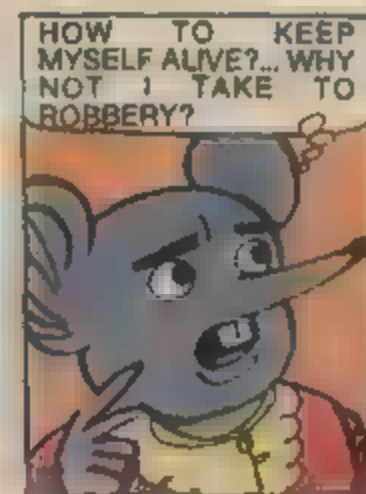
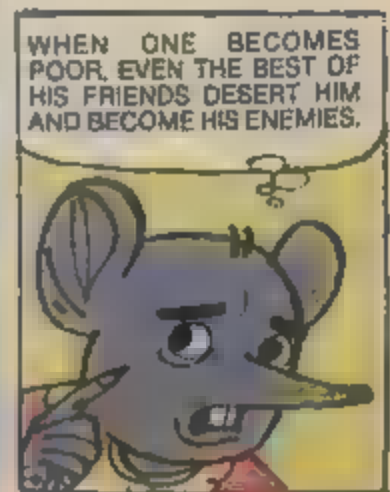
Growth stopped

He was a boy of normal height till he was 11—about 4 ft (120 cm). He then began to grow, not horizontally, but vertically. K. Gattaiah, of Karimnagar District, in Andhra Pradesh, is now 18 and 7ft 4 inches (223cm) tall—the tallest man in India, and was still growing—the past tense, because doctors recently performed a rare operation on him to stop further growth. Considered a surgical feat, it needed two operation tables put together lengthwise to lay the 'patient'. As many as 12 doctors, under the supervision of two other doctors, took almost five hours to remove a pituitary tumour to prevent the lower limbs from growing any further.

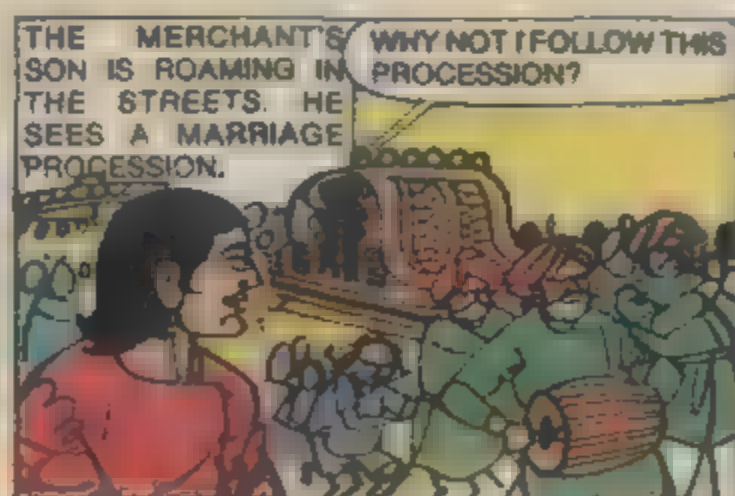
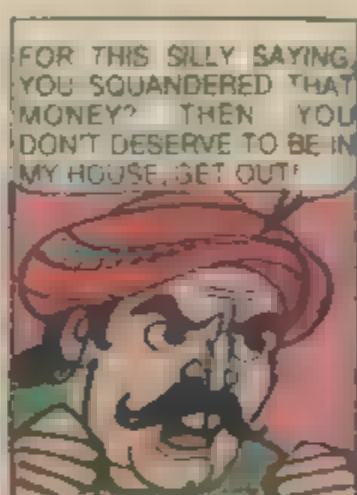




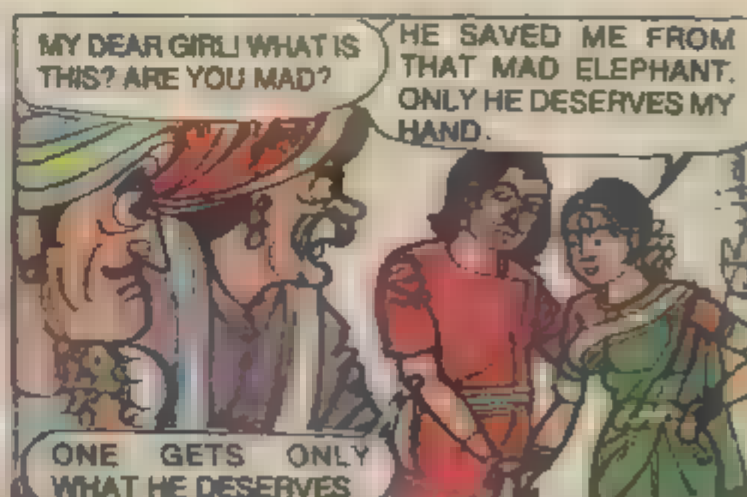
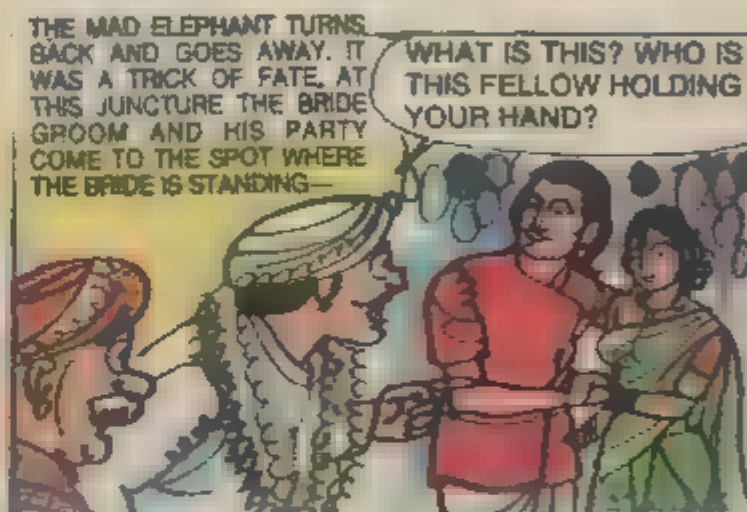
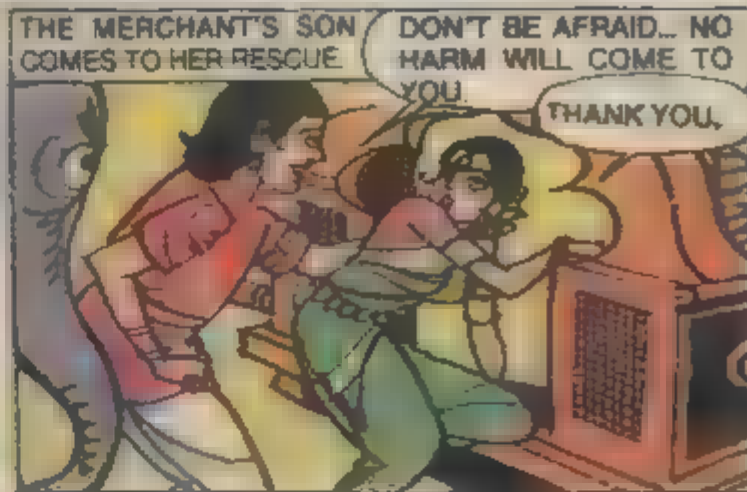
उत्तमे तु क्षणं कोपो मध्यमे घटिकाद्वयम् ।
अधमे स्यादहोरात्रं चाण्डाले मरणान्तिकः ॥



Wrath lasts only for a moment in those who are noble; in ordinary people it remains for an hour or two; in the inferior people it continues for a day and a night; with those who are the worst in lasts till their death.



पिबन्ति नद्यः स्वयमेव नाम्भः स्वयं । खादन्ति फलानि वृक्षाः ।
नादन्ति शस्यं खलु वारिवाहाः परोपकाराय सतां विभूतयः ॥



To Continue

The rivers do not drink their own water nor the trees eat their own fruits; or the clouds the crop nurtured by them. The resources of the noble, too, are meant for the well-being of others.

A Common Language

It was during a holiday trip to Sikkim that Lloyd Pinto of Bombay came across an expression, of Italian origin—*lingua franca*. *Lingua* simply means tongue. *Lingua franca* was originally ■ mixed trade jargon (meaning: slang) used in Italy. Subsequently, it came to mean ■ language chosen as a medium of communication among people who speak different languages. Like, in India, people who generally speak in any ■ of the 16 languages mentioned in the

Constitution or several others not yet officially recognised, often resort to Hindi to communicate with each other. Thus, Hindi has come to be described as the *lingua franca* of India.

U. Jagadeesh of Pamulapadu came across the expression "modus aparandi" and wishes to know its meaning. The correct spelling is *modus operandi* and its origin is from the Latin *modus*, meaning manner. The mode of operation or the way of working is popularly expressed as *modus operandi*—■ particular way of doing a job. Another allied expression is *modus vivendi*, which means, a way of life or living.

Kotla Jagadeeswara Reddy of Kurukunda has read the Bible, but

has not heard of *dry-bible* and wonders whether it is another holy book. No, it is a common disease among horned cattle in which the third stomach, called bible, goes very dry. Ruminating animals, like cows, have the habit of chewing the cud, or bringing back food from the first stomach to be chewed again and sent to the second and third stomach. The third stomach is 'called 'bible', because it has several folds like the leaves of ■ book.





(Both King Veerasen and Commander-in-chief Ugrasen ■■■ impressed by Mahendranath's determination in going out in search of the missing princess, and they ■■■ him that his mother will be looked after during his absence. The tenacious youth starts on his journey after a close look at the lake resort from where Vidyavati has disappeared. The boatman of the royal boat mistakes him for someone from the palace bringing glad tidings. He wishes him well when Mahendranath discloses his mission...)

After bidding farewell to the boatman, Mahendranath wended his way along the shores of the lake. There was no regular footpath and, as he progressed, he had to clear the jungle every now and then to make ■ way for himself. However, he kept to the water's edge in the hope that he might come across ■ clearing or ■

landing where the princess would probably have been brought by ■ boat from the island resort.

A whole day passed without Mahendranath coming across any clearing through which he could go deeper into the jungle. The next morning he started on his journey again, keeping close to the lake. His curiosity arose



when he suddenly found that the rocky edge had been cut like steps leading to the water. On closer examination, he came upon several branches of trees unevenly stacked, probably to prevent an easy entry into the jungle.

He took some time to clear the branches when he saw ■■ open space and ■ rough pathway taking off from there. There were signs that the open space had been used not long ago as could be guessed from the leaves on the ground. They showed that they had either been trampled upon ■ something heavy had been

dragged along the path. He came to the conclusion that the leaves must have been strewn to make the pathway as smooth ■ possible. Could it be that the princess ■ taken along the same path?

Mahendranath was now taking his steps slowly. The sun was still up, though the tall trees on either side blocked all sunlight falling on the path.

There was no end to Mahendranath's surprise when he suddenly walked into ■ large clearing, on one side of which stood what looked like ■ hermit's hut. It was small enough to tell him that if at all someone occupied it, he or she would be alone, without any or many to keep company.

He approached the hut with reverence. There was none outside and it looked as though there was no one inside either. He went all around and still he could not see anyone. He then heard ■ voice. "Son, are you looking for me or anyone else in particular?" It came from a *sanyasi*. He was sitting on the ground tending some plants in the garden.

"No, O revered sire!" Mahendranath prostrated before him. "I just happened to stumble into

this part of the jungle without knowing that anyone lived here at all." He waited till the sanyasi finished watering the plants and came near him. When he stood up, the sanyasi—though lean—looked majestic and Mahendranath was really struck by his kindly eyes, ■ face full of peace, and long flowing hair and beard that had turned all white. The sanyasi had a strong tall figure.

"It's already dark, and I won't advise you to continue your journey in the night, whatever be your destination," said the sanyasi, laying his hand on the young man's shoulders, ■ if he needed a support, and leading him to the hut. "You may stay with ■ for the night and tell me all about your mission."

They both entered the hut and made themselves comfortable. "I roamed about the whole country for several years and came here in search of solitude and peace. When I got it, I never wanted to go anywhere else and have been staying here, I don't know for how long, may be four or five years. And you are the first person to come this way and find ■ and my abode," said the sanyasi.

Mahendranath had kept silent for some time and then offered to massage the sanyasi's legs. The sanyasi gave himself to the pleasure for a change.

"No, son, I don't mean to say you've disturbed my solitude. I'm not at all angry with you," continued the sanyasi. "I'm only happy that you reached here without any mishap. But, son, you haven't told ■ anything about yourself. What's your name? Where do you come from? And where are you heading to in this jungle?"

"I'm Mahendranath, O revered sire!" the young ■ began. "I come from Veergiri where my mother gathers flowers and prepares garlands for the Devi's temple. ■ lost my father when I was small, and we were looked after by my uncle and his wife. But soon after she died suddenly at childbirth, he seemed to have lost all interest in life and one day disappeared without any trace or news."

Mahendranath noticed that the sanyasi had suddenly withdrawn his legs and had even got up from bed and ■ holding him by his shoulders, but he did not



give any significance to it. He thought, perhaps the sanyasi had been moved by his narration and was only expressing his feelings by a show of extreme affection.

"Maybe, you haven't heard of our Princess Vidyavati's abduction," Mahendranath continued. "This happened about a week ago and she has not been found as yet. The king's soldiers have spread out everywhere, but they haven't been able to get any news of her whereabouts. Right now I am not engaged in any work, so I thought I would make ■ search where the soldiers might not have

reached. And in case I succeeded, who knows the king would not be pleased to give me ■ job in the palace? The princess had disappeared from the lake palace and that's why I chose the jungle around the lake for my search."

"But son, nobody lives in these jungles, and the Dhaulagiri mountain on one side is just impregnable," cautioned the sanyasi. "On the other side of the mountain lies the kingdom of Himagiri, and there is no approach to that place through this jungle. It will be hazardous to attempt finding a way to the mountain or searching for any hideout in the jungle."

"It was the Raj Jyotishi who told the king that ■ search in the western parts might yield results," said Mahendranath. "O venerable sire! I'm young and quite strong. I think I can take risks that may come my way and face any danger. After all, I'm only doing my little mite to help the king find his daughter. Besides, the people like her very much and they are all agitated that such a heinous crime ■ abducting the princess should have taken place in their country."

"All right, son, I can understand your feelings," remarked the sanyasi. "You're only doing your duty as a loyal citizen, and nothing or nobody should discourage you."

When Mahendranath woke up, he saw that the sanyasi was in deep meditation. He prepared himself for the journey and waited till the sanyasi got up. He prostrated before him and the sanyasi blessed him. "So, you've decided to continue on your mission? I wish you well. Your tenacity will lead you to success. Here, take this ring. I have consecrated it for your sake and it'll help you cross all hurdles. The stone on it has some special powers, and you'll find them out yourself. What they are, I am not to tell you, and I bid you not to disclose them to anyone. Only then will it retain those powers. I've no idea how far you'll have to go to achieve your mission, but if you succeed, about which I've no doubt, I would ask you to come this way before you return to your mother. Poor lady, she will be anxiously awaiting your safe return."

"O venerable sire! I didn't tell

you about her," explained Mahendranath. "His majesty the king was gracious enough to arrange for her maintenance when I'm away and she'll be looked after from the palace. Besides, the Commander-in-chief, Ugrasen, has assured me of her well-being. I'm not worried on account of her, and I can go with peace. I'm so grateful to you, sire, for this ring and I promise I shall come back to your presence as soon as I complete my mission."

The sanyasi embraced him with great affection. Mahendranath saw that his eyes had by then welled up. He wondered how someone who had given up all wordly thoughts and feelings should be moved to tears? And why?

When he came out of the precincts of the sanyasi's hut, Mahendranath wondered for some time to which direction he should turn. He then remembered the instructions from the Commander-in-chief that he would better attempt to reach the west from the south. So, he started walking from that direction.

Though he did not join the



makeshift footpath that he had taken the previous day, he found his passage not very difficult as he had feared. He soon reached the mountainous parts and as he climbed, he saw that there were fewer trees and they were also not tall. The climb was rather strenuous and Mahendranath had to rest his legs every now and then. But that gave him time to survey his surroundings. When he looked below, he could not see anything else than the top of trees. And the trees on the slopes above prevented much of a view.

By sunset he thought he had

almost reached the top of the mountain, and looking straight into his eyes were the high walls of some mansion, much of which could not be seen from the slope he was standing. In the twilight it was difficult to get any idea of the building, except that it was quite tall and perhaps huge. Mahendranath was unable to find any door or gateway for some time. He went round along the wall to find an opening somewhere. It was quite dark when he came upon some steps hewn on the rocky slope. The steps climbed to an iron gate and he went up to it. He found it had been fastened by a chain.

Mahendranath clanked the chain for some time. He saw someone coming with a lantern. "Oh! I thought my master has come! Who're you?" He sounded quite surprised over the arrival of a stranger at the gate. He was holding the lantern aloft to see the visitor's face.

"I'm Mahendranath of Veergiri. I could not get any work there, so I started for Himagiri in search of a job. I was told there was a short-cut through this mountain. But it has taken me

almost three days to reach here. Do you think I can stay here for the night and proceed to Himagiri in the morning? It's quite late now, and I'm afraid I may not find the way."

The man opened the gate by unlocking the chain. "I'm the gatekeeper here. I've a room up there. You may stay with me." He let Mahendranath in and fastened the chain once again. He then led the way, holding the lantern a little behind him for Mahendranath.

They crossed the portico and entered a side-room. The door was ajar. "You may make yourselves comfortable. Let me go and fetch some food for you. Strangers are not allowed inside the premises; we've strict instructions. In fact, if my master had been here, I wouldn't have let you in at all."

"When is your master expected? No, I don't want you to earn his wrath on account of me. I shall go away early in the morning."

"That's all right. My master, though very strict, is a good man. If he comes to know under what circumstances you reached this



place, he would certainly take pity on you, no doubt about that," the man put Mahendranath at ease. "Let me now go for the food." He left the room closing the door behind him.

'So far so good,' thought Mahendranath, while awaiting the man's return. 'The place appears mysterious—as mysterious as the owner himself. I don't think the princess would have been brought all the distance to this god-forsaken place. There's no point in wasting my time here. I must leave tomorrow itself.'

The door opened and the gatekeeper came in with a *thali* of eatables. "Nothing much, but I could manage it," he said apologetically. "That'll keep your hunger away."

"So, you were expecting your master? When will he come now?" asked Mahendranath very casually.

"I don't know. He may come any day. When he goes away, we all come to know; but we are never told how long he would be away. He would return suddenly, and that's why we are always alert," explained the gatekeeper.

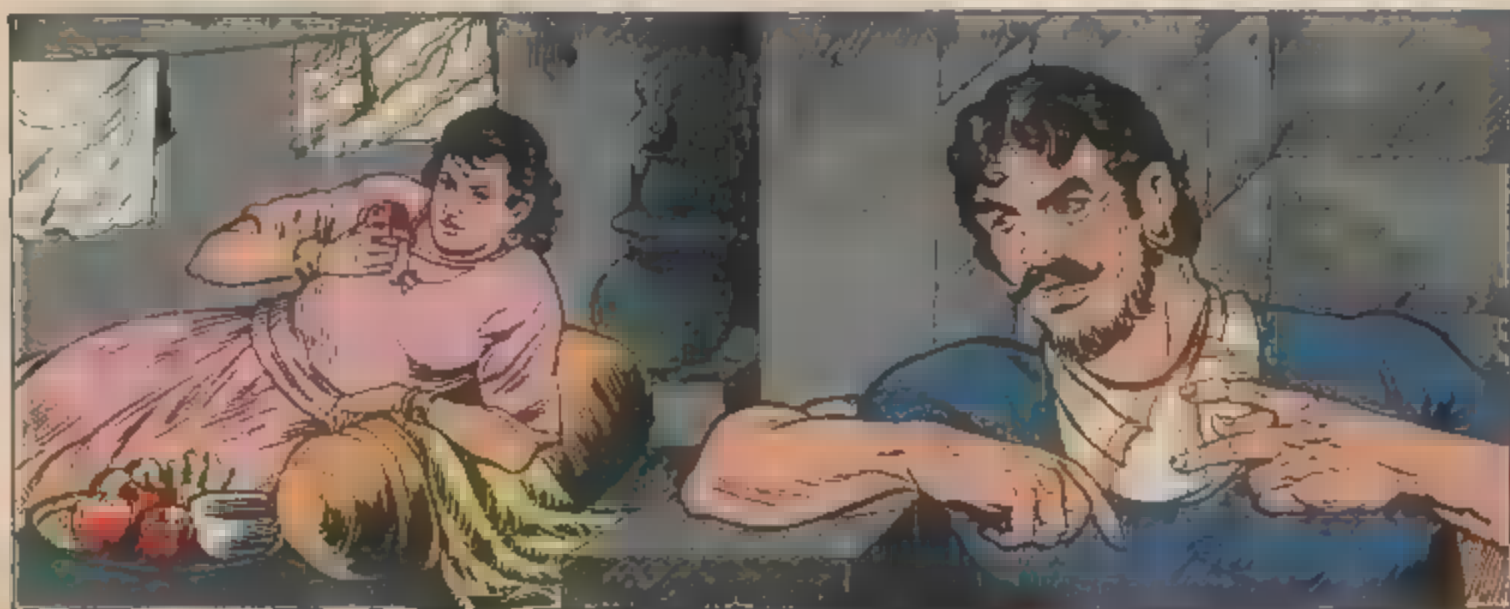
"You said 'we'. Who else is there? Your master's family?" asked Mahendranath, some curiosity now slowly creeping in him.

"I've never seen his family. He's always alone in his apartments. Sometimes he may not

come out of his rooms at all for a whole day or two. We take his food only when he calls for it. Those people who had opportunities to glance around tell us that he would be surrounded by papers and ancient books and would be looking into certain diagrams drawn on the floor. He didn't come out for almost two whole days after some important visitor came to stay here recently. Perhaps she wanted to consult him. When he came out, he didn't even ask for food, but went away in a hurry. That's why I say, he might return any time."

The word 'she' struck in Mahendranath's mind. If that would in any way indicate the princess and her presence there, he decided, he should find some excuse for sticking there for some days.

—To continue





LET US KNOW

Who was the first and last Governor-General of India?

—Shoab Momin, Bombay

Mr. C. Rajagopalachari was the first Governor-General of India after the departure of the last Viceroy, Lord Mountbatten, marking the end of the British rule. Rajaji was succeeded by the first President of Independent India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad.

What is the difference between World Record and Olympic Record?

—Rajkumar Mangal Singh, Pallel

Olympic records are the ones made at Olympic Games, whereas world records can be made at the Olympic Games as well as other recognised sports meets. Turn to "World of Sport" elsewhere in this issue for the world records created at the recent Olympic Games in Barcelona.

What are the three principal races in the world?

—Habibur Rehman, Bombay

Anthropologists divided the human race into three hypothetical groups: Caucasoid, Mongoloid, and Negroid. Scientific studies have, however, failed to indicate any absolute confirmation of genetic racial divisions.

Readers are welcome to send such queries on culture, literature or general knowledge which should be of interest to others too, for brief answers from the Chandamama.

World Records

Compared to the Seoul Olympics (1988), few world records ■ shattered in the 25th Olympic Games in Barcelona. Among the outstanding ■ were:

46.78seconds in 400m hurdles (considered the most punishing event in competitive athletics) by Kevin



Young of the U.S.A. (the first man to run the event under 47seconds), who broke the record (47.02s) set by Edwin Moses in 1983;

37.40seconds in men's 4x100m relay by the U.S. team, anchored by the world's best all-round athlete, Carl Lewis, bettering the U.S. record (37.50s) in Tokyo last year and its own earlier record (37.83s) anchored by Carl Lewis in the Los Angeles Games (1984);

2min. 55.74 seconds in men's 4x400m relay by the U.S. team, breaking the oldest mark in the record books.

As against the three new records in athletics, there were five in swimming

3min. 45s in 400m freestyle by Evgueni Sadovyi (C.I.S.), improving on 3min. 46.47s set by Kieren Perkins (Australia). Sadovyi had earlier won two gold medals in 200m freestyle and 4x200m relay for the C.I.S. team with a world record.

2min. 10.16s in 200m breast-stroke by Mike Barrowman (U.S.A.), bettering his own 2min. 10.60s set in 1991;

24.79 seconds in women's 50m freestyle by Yang Wenyi (China), which was 0.19s better than her own world mark set in Guangzhou in 1988;

14min. 43.48s in men's 1,500m freestyle by Kieren Perkins (Australia), which was an improvement by 4.92s ■ his timing in Canberra (April, 1992);

3min. 36.93s in men's 4x100m medley relay by the U.S. team.



FASTEST

The most coveted prize ■ any Olympic Games is the gold for the 100m sprint. At Barcelona, Linford Christie of Britain (9.96seconds) became the fastest man, and Gail Devers of the U.S.A. (10.82s) the

HIGHLIGHTS AND SIDELIGHTS

the greatest woman on earth.

At the Seoul Olympics, Christie was the silver medallist behind Carl Lewis's gold. He is the third Briton to win the event since the modern Olympics began in 1896. Christie described it as the greatest moment in his 32 years' career.

For 25-year-old Devers from Seattle, it was almost a miracle, as it was only a year ago that she recovered from a rare thyroid condition which once required a partial amputation of a foot.



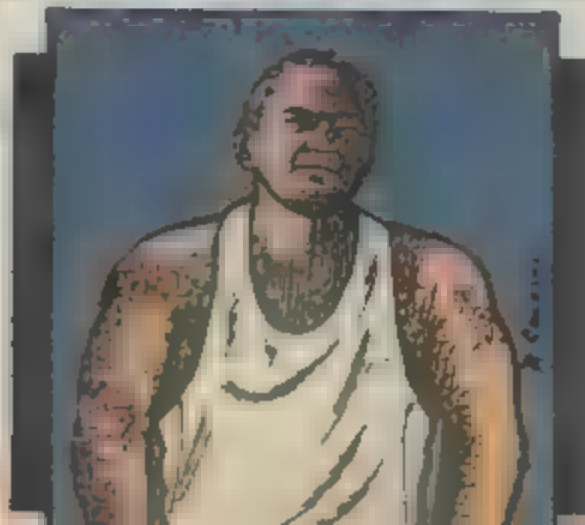
THE GREATEST

Carl Lewis competed only in four events and he won a gold in three of them, taking his tally of Olympic golds to 8 and one silver. Besides the gold in 4x100m relay, he won the other gold in Barcelona in long jump (8.67 metres). Consider his achievements so far: he ran the 100m in less than 10 seconds 15 times; won under 10 seconds eight times; cleared more than 10m in long jump 59 times; and anchored world records in the 4x100m relay six times and the 4x400m two

times. Between 1981 and 1991, he won 65 consecutive long jumps before he lost to Mike Powell's world record. In that series, he jumped more than 29m (8.84m) three times—the only jumper to clear that distance three times in the same series. Small wonder Carl Lewis is considered the greatest athlete of modern times—a shade better than Jesse Owens (U.S.A.), who won four golds in the 1936 Berlin Olympics. Carl Lewis won golds in the four events in the Los Angeles Games a year later. Listen to him: "I feel I can jump farther and run faster.... the Lord will say when it's time to stop."

A FALLEN IDOL

That was none other than Sergei Bubka of Ukraine, who failed to clear the pole vault bar once—despite nearly 30 world records and other titles in his kitty. The title was won by Maxim Tarassov, his colleague in the C.I.S. team, at 5.80m. Remember, the world record (5.95m) is still with Bubka. Incidentally, 22-year-old Tarassov once cleared 5 metres at the age of 15, when he was called a child prodigy.



FIRST, BUT NO GOLD

Morocco's Khalid Skah first in men's 10,000 metres in 27min. 46.70seconds, but was disqualified as it was alleged his teammate interfered with Kenya's medal hope Richard Chelimo (27min. 47.42s) in the last stages. The medals ceremony was suspended, ■ Morocco went on appeal. The gold was awarded to him after deliberations lasting 12 hours. The teenager Kenyan sportingly accepted the silver and announced his intention to break the world record at the very next meet. His agent said: "Richard has no animosity towards Skah."

GYMNASTICS HISTORY

Vitaly Scherbo of Belarus piled up six golds to create gymnastics history.



The previous records of four gold medals in gymnastics ■ also held by Soviet stars in 1952, 1960, 1976, and 1988. Scherbo, the 20-year-old from Minsk, won four individual golds in men's rings, vault, parallel bars, and pommel horse; the other two golds were for individual all-round and team titles—making him an Olympic legend. The all-round gold for women



competitors went to 15-year-old Tatyana Gutsu (also of C.I.S.)

YOUNGEST, SMALLEST, BIGGEST

—China's Fu Mingxia from Hubei, at 13, became the youngest ever gold medallist in Olympic Games. She won the women's 10m platform diving event. Last year, at the Perth World Championships, she was denied entry in the senior level, ■ the age

limit had been fixed at 14.

—She was not the youngest, though she is popularly called "Little Miss Perfect". China's Zhang Shan is 24; she set a new Olympic record and became the first woman skeet titleholder at Barcelona. Her mark is one hit better than the Olympic record of Axel Wegner of the former G.D.R.



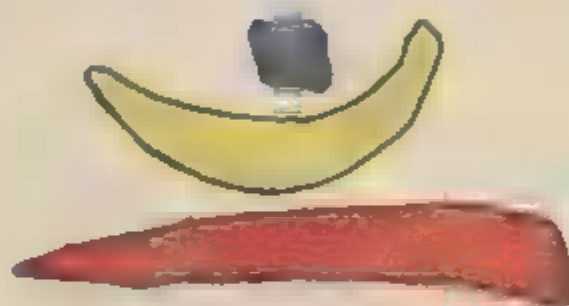
—"Pocket Hercules" Bulgaria-born Naim Suleymanoglu retained his title in the featherweight division. This 153cm (5 ft) lifter had set his world record in the Seoul Olympics four years ago. He became ■ Turkish citizen after Bulgaria's participation in the Melbourne Olympics in 1986.

—At 165kg, Mark Henry is still the biggest weightlifter in Olympic history, and this after dieting for 18 months, from 185kg. But, then, that was no qualification for any medal!

REUNION

Mark Lenzi (U.S.A.) ■■■ ■ gold medal for diving and that brought his

estranged father back to him. Bill Lenzi had wanted his son to be a wrestler, but the boy switched over to diving, when diver Greg Louganis (U.S.A.) ruined his wrestling career by winning two golds at Los Angeles. The senior Lenzi wanted Mark to stick to wrestling, hoping he would secure a wrestling scholarship for his college education. Disappointed, Bill left home and stayed with a neighbour. The diving gold brought son and father together again. "Parents don't always know everthing," ■■■ Mark's cryptic remark.



WHAT WAS IT?

The 25th Olympics emblem baffled everyone. The guesses ranged from a bird, grape-banana-carrot, something in ■ boat, to a sombrero, and even a dancer! Someone tried to describe it: ■ blue square, ■ yellow half moon, and ■ uneven slash of red. If anyone had asked the artist, Josep Maria Trias, himself, he would have answered: the emblem is an athlete in motion, with the blue representing the Mediterranean, the yellow sun, and the red "the force of life". There you are!



MAN AND NATURE

(This section is devoted to ecology and environment)

WATER: HOW MUCH CAN WE WASTE?

Do you know how much water we have on the lands inhabited by man? No more than 3 per cent of the total water-wealth of the world. In other words, 97 per cent of the water in the earth goes to make the

Well, the seas are a must for the survival of life on the earth, but we cannot drink sea-water, nor can we irrigate our fields with it. We have to live and thrive directly on 3 per cent of the water on the land. But this much (3 per cent) water is not quite at our disposal, for 77 per cent of it remains in the form of gigantic ice-hills and glaciers; 22 per cent remains underground. Do you think it is free to us at least the remaining 1 per cent which meets us in rivers and lakes? No, for much of it remains too deep to be pumped out by us.

Out of this meagre portion of the earth's total water stock available to man, 73 per cent is used for irrigation, 21 per cent goes for industrial use, and only 6 per cent is for use for public purposes.

And what is the condition of the drinking water available to man? Here is a passage from a document released by the United Nations:

The lack of clean drinking water and appropriate sanitation is the main reason for the prevalence of communicable diseases in developing countries. Diarrhoeal diseases are endemic throughout the developing countries and are the world's major cause of infant mortality. Cholera, typhoid fever, and different intestinal parasites also affect hundreds of millions of people. Studies estimate that the provision of clean water and basic sanitation would reduce the incidence of diarrhoea by 90 per cent, cholera by 90 per cent, sleeping sickness by 80 per cent, and Guinea worm infestation by 100 per cent.

So, we must be careful about our water, isn't it?

CHANGAMAMA SUPPLEMENT-98



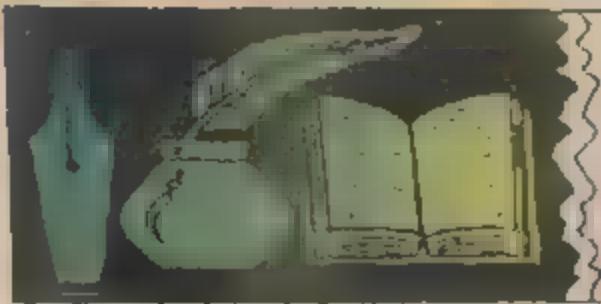
BIRDS AND ANIMALS OF INDIA

The 'teddy-bear' is a favourite toy-doll with the younger children. Many of you must have seen photographs or movies of little children taking their teddy-bear to their bed to sleep with. Do you know that this popular toy is an imitation of the Koala bear of Australia?

The Pandas of India can be compared to the Koala bear. It is a handsome animal with a round head and short legs like those of a bear. The full body from the head measures some 60cm, while the tail is about 40 cm. The ears are rather large and erect, and are not pointed. The muzzle is stumpy. The tail is ringed. The animal is of a bright chestnut colour. The tail is rust brown. The underside is black while the head is white.

Pandas are seen in heights, in the mountainous regions in the north. Day time they sleep comfortably lying flat on top of a branch. They are active between dusk and dawn when they go hunting for food, which comprises mostly bamboo shoots, succulent plants, fruits and tubers. Sometimes they eat eggs. They live either alone or in pairs. They are capable of making a weak whistling sound, which is often mistaken for the chirping of birds. Pandas are much prized for their fur.

Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru could often be seen playing with the Pandas that were reared in the gardens of his official residence, Teen Murti Bhavan, in New Delhi.

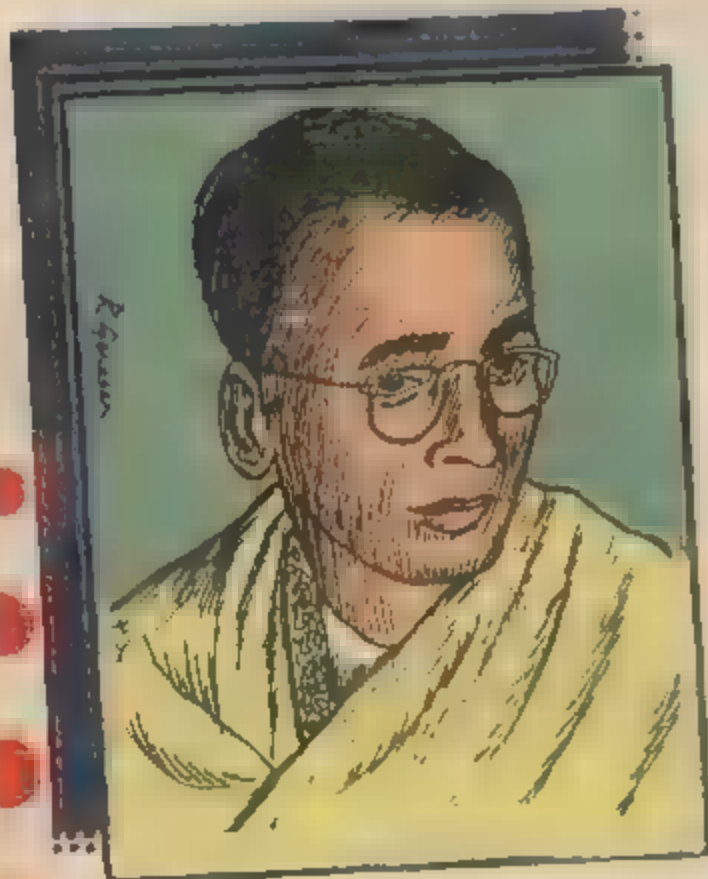


INDIA THROUGH HER LITERATURE

India is a great country which has nurtured so many languages and many cultures through the ages. Each major language of India has a rich literature. We know more or less about the great books of the past. But we know little about the outstanding books of our time. In these pages, Chandamama will tell you the stories of the novels of our time written in different Indian languages. The narration will be very brief, but we hope, this will inspire readers to read the full book in original or in translation in the future.

—Editor

BANDOPADHYA'S GANA DEVATA



The background of the story is a village in Bengal in the twenties of this century.

Shirhari of Shivapur knows nothing except his self-interest. He wants to be rich at the cost of others; his ambition is to become the most important man in the village.

He is brutal towards those who dare oppose him. He even does not hesitate stealthily to put fire to the huts of the poor folk against whom he had a grudge.

But once they had been reduced to misery, he comes forward with offers of help. Whatever the people may think of him, they have to praise him on his face. He feels flattered—and grows even more ambitious.

But that is a time when a new awakening is coming among the villagers. The village blacksmith and the barber are no longer willing to go on serving the villagers unless paid properly. There are quarrels and skirmishes in the village.

But, while most of the villagers are creatures given to the ordinary hopes and fears of life, there are a few exceptional ones. Among them the



foremost is Debu, a teacher who is brave and noble. Another is Jagan the physician, who not only treats his patients with dedication, but always tries to do good to the community.

The Government is making a survey of the lands. A petty official misbehaves with Debu the teacher, and when Debu protests, the fellow is furious. A false case is filed against Debu. He is arrested and jailed. Resentment against the

foreign (British) rule and all kinds of oppression is already in the air. Debu becomes the symbol of people's courage. The day he is taken away by the police the villagers are united in raising slogans in his praise.

Debu's release after a year brings a wave of happiness in the village. Meanwhile, a young man named Jatin, a revolutionary, has come to live in that village. Shrihari has become the new zamindar (landlord), by purchasing the estate from the old landlord. Lands which are not under anybody's occupation legally belong to the zamindar. But the people use them as pasture for their cattle and the trees on such lands are considered common property. Shrihari the new zamindar begins cutting the trees. The villagers protest. Debu is accidentally injured in the course of a small clash. At night someone cuts down the newly planted trees in Shrihari's garden.

The blame is laid on Debu and he is about to be arrested when the village blacksmith, Aniruddha, a whimsical dare-devil, makes a statement that it is he who had destroyed Shrihari's garden and not Debu. He is arrested.

An epidemic of cholera breaks out. While helping in the cremation of the dead, Debu brings the deadly germs home and his little son is infected with them. The child dies, followed by Debu's wife.

Debu is a lone man—and he feels even more lonely when Jatin, the revolutionary young man who had become his friend, is ordered to leave the village.

But that life, full of struggle on several fronts. What gives one strength is one's faith in something higher, something greater than mere search for comfort.

Tarashankar (1898-1971) was an outstanding author of numerous stories and novels in Bengali. *Gana Devata* (The god of the masses) brought him the Jnanpith Award in 1967.

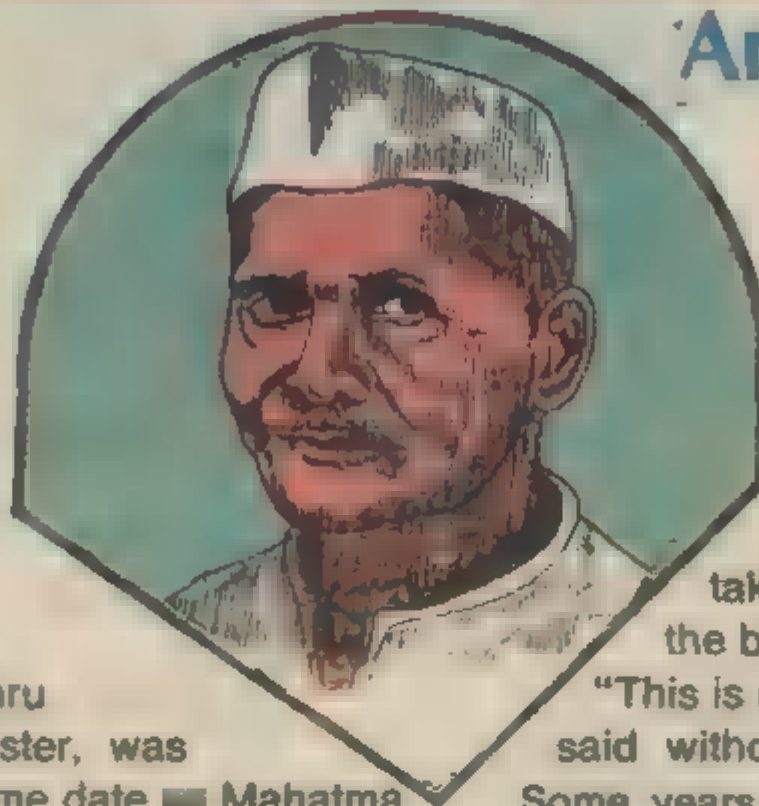
DO YOU KNOW?

1. There are only two island museums in the World. One is near Abu Simbel in Egypt. The other is in India. Where is it located?
2. One thousand stone-steps lead to the shrine of a goddess on a hill near a city. Which shrine?
3. Which country has never printed its name on its stamps?
4. What is the object in the centre of the white band in our National Flag?
5. What is the currency of Myanmar (former Burma)?
6. Who is considered as the founder of the Red Cross?
7. L.E. Waterman is famous for which invention?
8. Who was the ninth Guru of the Sikhs?
9. Name the musical instrument played by maestro Amir Khusro.
10. Which Indian state is the largest exporter of Cashewnuts?
11. Where is the Eiffel Tower? Who built it?
12. Who wrote the famous biography of Dr. Samuel Johnson?
13. To which period do the earliest Indian coins belong to?
14. An Indian patriot died in jail after observing hunger strike. Who was he?
15. What does Operation Flood mean?

ANSWERS

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. At Nagarjunakonda, in Andhra Pradesh | 8. Guru Tegh Bahadur |
| 2. The shrine of Chamundeswari, near Mysore | 7. Fountain pen |
| 3. Great Britain | 6. Jean Henri Durant |
| 4. The Asoka Chakra in navy blue | 5. The Kyat |
| | 4. The Asoka Chakra in navy blue |
| | 3. Great Britain |
| | 2. The shrine of Chamundeswari, near Mysore |
| 9. The Sarod | 11. The 985 feet high tower is in Paris. It was built by Gustav Eiffel in 1887-89. |
| 10. Kerala | 12. James Boswell |
| | 13. 5th Century B.C. |
| | 14. Jatin Das |
| | 15. Increasing the production of milk. It is also called the White Revolution. |

LEAVES
FROM
THE
LIVES
OF
THE
GREAT



An Example of Strong Will

Lal Bahadur Shastri, who succeeded Jawaharlal Nehru ■ Prime Minister, was born on the same date ■ Mahatma Gandhi—October 2—though 35 years apart: 1869 and 1904. He was 11 years old when he saw and listened to Gandhiji for the first time, at Varanasi. Lal Bahadur was thrilled when Gandhiji denounced the British rule and declared the nation's right to freedom. In a quick succession of events, Gandhiji led the Champaran Satyagraha, which marked his first victory over foreign rule. The British retaliated with the ill-famed Jallianwala Bagh massacre. Gandhiji now gave the call for ■ non-violent civil disobedience movement, asking people to boycott British-run schools, offices, and courts, even foreign-made clothes.

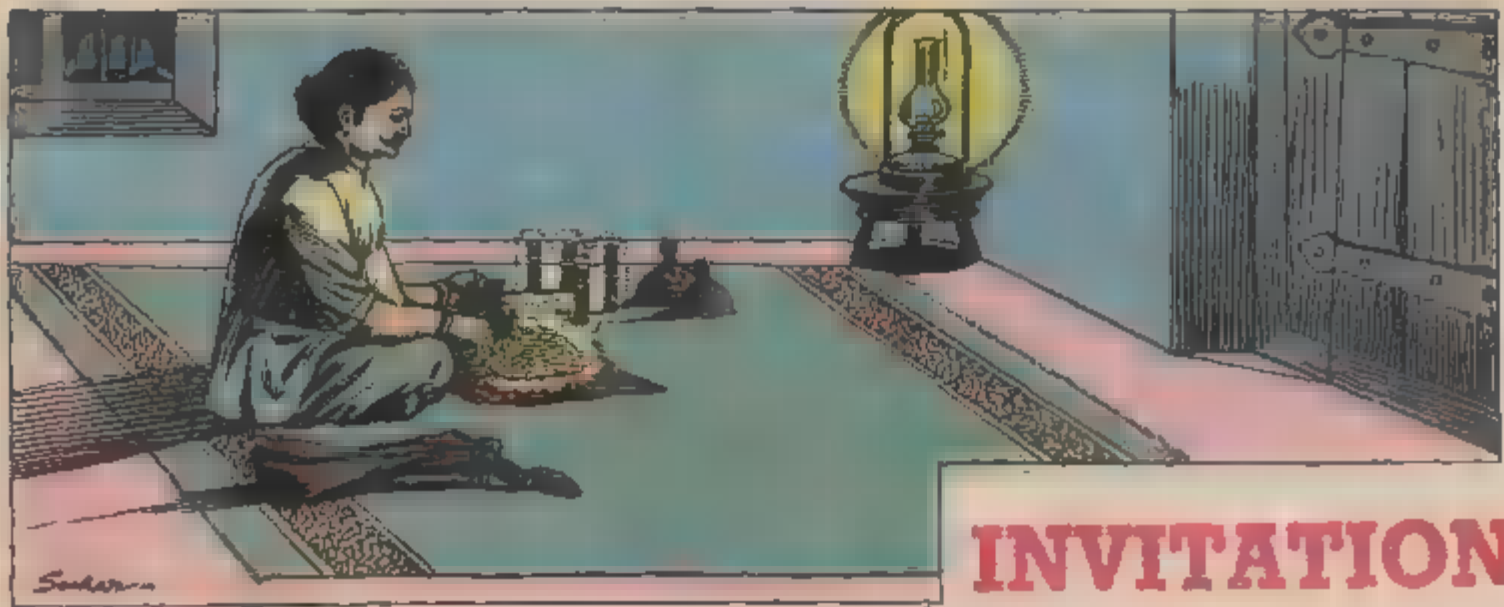
Thousands of children stopped going to school. Lal Bahadur ■ one of them. His favourite Mathematics teacher tried to dissuade him, saying he had his widowed mother

and two sisters to take care of. For once the boy defied his teacher.

"This is my country's call!" he said without batting an eyelid.

Some years later, Shastri was in jail when word went to him that his son was seriously ill. He was let on parole for a week, and he spent all the days attending on the little boy. The day he had to go back to jail, the child ■ still running high fever. The Englishman Magistrate offered to extend the parole, provided Shastri promised that he would keep himself away from political activity. He refused, and prepared to leave home despite the child's pleading, "Father, don't go!"

Lal Bahadur Shastri had such ■ strong will. Here's yet another example: He was Railway Minister in the Nehru Cabinet, and had no hesitation in owning moral responsibility when over 140 people lost their lives in a train accident near Ariyalur, in Tamilnadu, in 1956. His action by tendering his resignation has since remained a singular example.



INVITATION

Ramalingam was a successful merchant of Ramanathapuram. The moment he came back home after closing his shop, he would close the door, empty his money-bag, and count the day's collection, before he ate his food.

One day, he had just started counting the money that he had spread on a mat, when he heard a knock on the door. He quickly removed his towel and spread it over the coins and notes, before he went and opened the door. It was his distant relative, Duraiswami. The man did not notice the towel and went and sat on the mat. As the towel was thick, he did not know there was money underneath.

Ramalingam sat close to Duraiswami and engaged him in

conversation to draw his attention away from the place where he was sitting. Duraiswami explained the purpose of his sudden visit. "Ramalingam, I'm in bad need of money. Could you spare fifty rupees? I know I can depend on you."

Ramalingam was really taken aback. "I'm afraid I won't be able to help you. It was a bad day for me, at the shop. I didn't make even five rupees," he excused himself.

Suddenly, there was a strong breeze and the lantern in the room blew out, leaving the room dark. Ramalingam caught hold of Duraiswami's hands and said, "You've come after such a long time; you must dine with me. Come on!"

A disappointed Duraiswami

replied, "I was expecting some help from you; but you're unable to come to my aid. Let ■■■ go, I shall not stay for food."

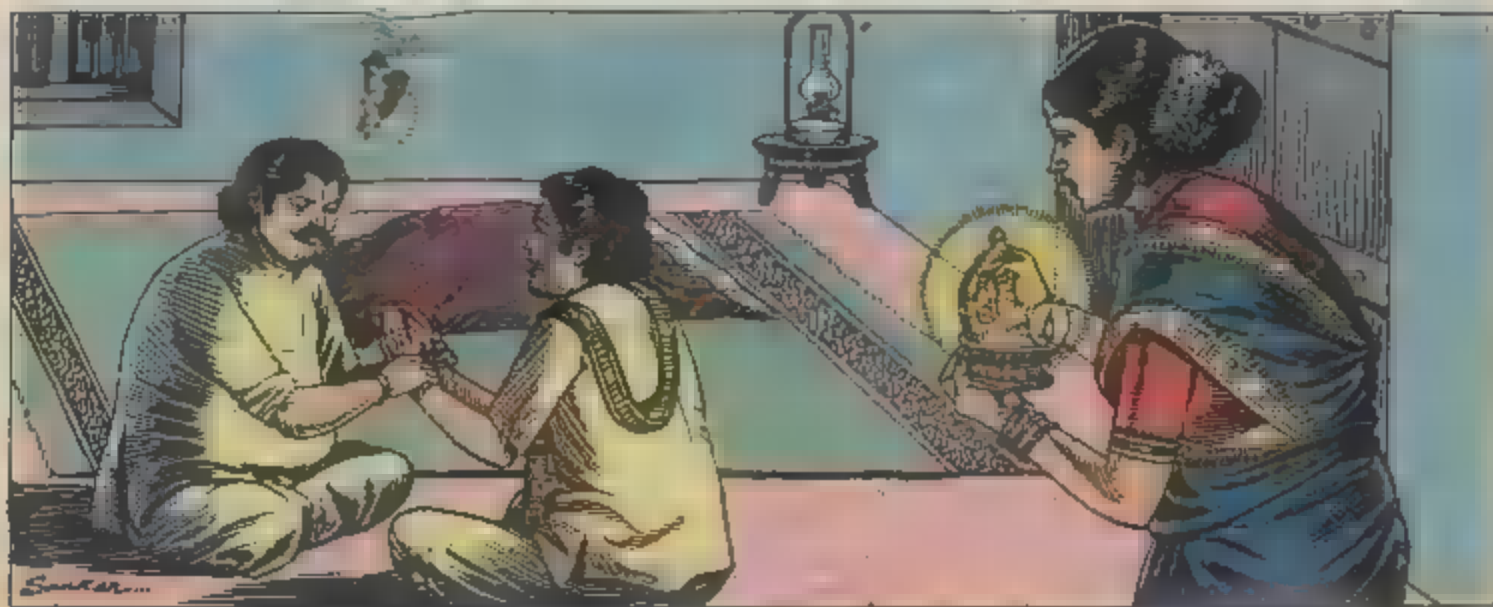
Just then Ramalingam's wife brought another lantern. Ramalingam let go Duraiswami's hands and said, "As you please. I hope there's no misunderstanding. There were not many customers today, and those to whom I had given credit did not also turn up. And I was unable to go out to them. So, today's collection was really bad. Anyway, you must come some time and share a meal with me."

Ramalingam thus tried to dispel any misunderstanding that might have been left in Duraiswami. The moment he left, Ramalingam closed the

door. "I heard you ask him to stay for dinner. A little later, you were also asking him to come some other day. I'm not able to understand this sudden change in your behaviour," his wife queried.

"I was counting the day's collection when Duraiswami came in, and he went and sat on the money. When the lantern blew out, I was afraid he might find the money beneath the towel and grab some. That's why I caught hold of his hands and invited him to dine with us. Then you brought another lamp. I was not very keen on his staying in the room any longer. So, when he excused himself, I readily agreed!"

"So, that was the secret?" the woman remarked.

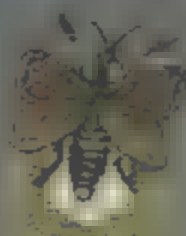




When crocodiles are busy basking in the sun, they are generally harmless as they are then not keen on hunting for prey. Birds can be seen freely pecking at their scaly top for insects, worms, and leeches. They are not afraid of even getting inside the crocodile mouth kept widely open. However, it's a different matter at night when these huge reptiles love to hunt and eat after they get back into water. Fish, frogs, and insects are easy prey, and they will not spare any animal that goes near the water's edge for a drink. They drag the animal into the water to drown it ~~as soon~~ tearing it into ~~bits~~ ~~and~~ swallowing ~~them~~. Crocodiles ~~cannot~~ chew with their teeth!

The national bird ~~is~~ ~~the~~ ~~most~~ ~~beautiful~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~world~~ ~~is~~ ~~a~~ ~~mouthful~~ ~~of~~ ~~a~~ ~~name~~—Quetzal. The male bird is one ~~of~~ the most beautiful creatures in the world. Its body is about 35 cm long ~~and~~ the tail almost twice as long. What is peculiar about this bird ~~is~~ it launches itself ~~downward~~ from its perch, ~~instead~~ of flying straight forward. This ~~is~~ ~~to~~ avoid ~~the~~ long ~~tail~~ from hitting the tree branch and the ~~tail~~ falling into shreds. ~~The~~ female lays eggs in ~~holes~~ on tree trunks. When the ~~male~~ bird sits on ~~the~~ ~~eggs~~, its tail hangs out ~~because~~ of its ~~extraordinary~~ length.

Fireflies ~~are~~ ~~the~~ ~~most~~ ~~common~~ among ~~bioluminescent~~ ~~creatures~~. They are a variety of ~~insects~~ which produce light to attract mates. The light emitted by the lantern-eye fish, however, actually comes ~~from~~ ~~the~~ luminous bacteria that live in the organs below the eye. With the help of a ~~special~~ fold in the skin, the fish ~~is~~ able to shut off the light! The aborigines of Brazil make use of one variety of mushroom to light their way. It has a luminous cap at the bottom.





New Tales of King Vikram and the Vampire

THE FINAL CHOICE

Dark was the night and weird the atmosphere. It rained from time to time; gusts of wind shook the trees. Between thunderclaps and the moaning of jackals could be heard the eerie laughter of spirits. Flashes of lightning revealed fearsome faces.

But King Vikramaditya did not swerve a bit. He climbed the ancient tree once again and brought down the corpse. However, soon he began crossing the desolate cremation grounds with the corpse lying on his shoulder, the vampire that possessed the corpse spoke: "O King, You seem to be making untiring efforts and without respite as if you wish to achieve something. I pity you. Instead of enjoying a comfortable sleep on a cozy bed, you're still coming after me. Do you think what you're aiming to do is within your capacity? One



must know one's limits and limitations before aspiring anything. Maybe you'll understand this better if you listen to this story. It's about a beautiful woman called Sona Roopa." The vampire then began his narration.

Girishwar ■ ■ well-to-do farmer of Indragiri. His wife, Pramila, spent quite ■ few years, visiting holy places and making offerings to be blessed with ■ child. When the baby ■ ■ born, everyone was struck by her beauty. There was ■ golden glitter about her and the parents

named her Sona Roopa. As she grew up, she turned ■ lovely maiden capable of drawing anybody's attention. Her friends, relations, and neighbours, all had only one remark to make: "Sona, you look like ■ princess. You'll certainly be coveted by none else than a prince. Take care!"

Sona was carried away by such comments and praise. Heart of hearts she, too, wished that she became a princess and married ■ prince. This ambition made her arrogant.

Sureshchand was a close friend of Girishwar. One day he proposed to Girish, "Would you give your daughter's hand to my son Ramesh?"

"Why not?" responded Girishwar. "But why hurry? Let the time come and we'll see then.."

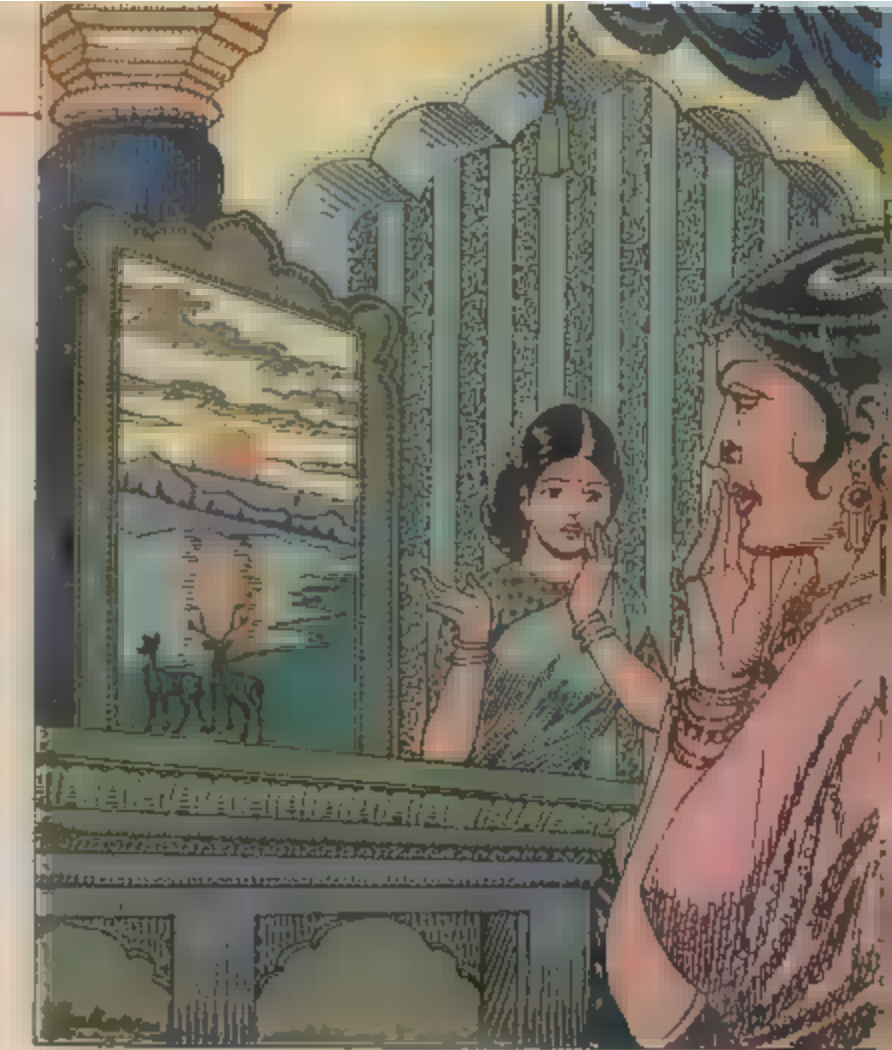
It so happened Ramesh ran into Sona as she was watering plants in ■ ■ garden. He stopped her and said, "Sona, I like you very much. Would you marry me?" Ramesh was ■ well-behaved young man; clever, too. But somehow Sona had not yet been drawn to him. Arrogant ■ she was, she curtly said, "I don't like you ■ wee bit!"

"I know what's in your mind. Anyway, take it from me, Sona," said Ramesh, "if ever I marry anyone, it will be only you, and none else."

Sona remained silent, without giving him any reply. She was only imagining of a Prince Charming who would ask for her hand. She decided that she should prepare herself to be a princess—in dress and behaviour. And the only way she could get that kind of training would be to spend some days in a palace with a queen. One of her friends managed to get her introduced to the queen of the land and Sona became her maid-in-waiting.

One day, an artist called on the queen. "Your highness! I've brought one of my best paintings for you. Would you graciously accept it?"

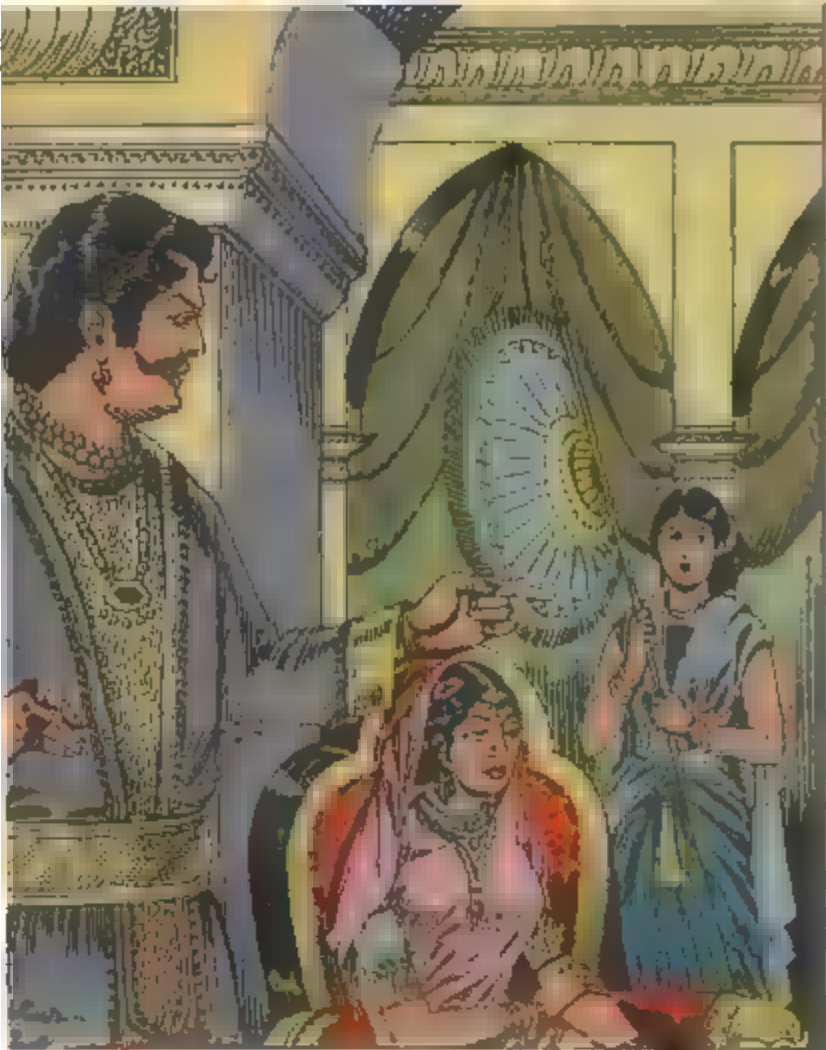
The queen asked Sona to open the covering and show her the painting. The artist had captured the sunset in all its glory. The queen liked the work very much and was in praise for the artist and gave him a gift of a hundred gold coins. After the artist had gone away, the queen asked Sona. "What do you think of the



painting?"

"There's nothing extraordinary about it, your highness," replied Sona. "After all, we see sunset every day; he could have painted something else. I feel, it does not deserve a hundred coins."

The queen was not hurt by Sona's comments. She merely smiled and said, "Sona, you're blessed with so much of beauty, that's why you're not able to appreciate beauty in other things. Mind you, if I had given him anything less, it wouldn't have been befitting of a queen. Prob-



bly you didn't realise that aspect." Sona listened to the queen in silence.

One evening, she was in attendance when the queen and the king were engaged in conversation. A soldier rushed in. "Your majesty, word has just been received that our neighbour is approaching us with his army!"

Sona suddenly dropped the fan she was holding, and began trembling from head to foot. The queen fell into deep thought. "I was apprehending this attack. Don't worry. Our army is well

prepared to meet any eventualities," said the king. He then turned to Sona. "Why are you afraid like this? If you people, confined to the palace, cannot take such threats, what about the others? These are all every day happenings. You should be able to face them bravely. If you can't, then we don't want your service."

One day, the queen left on a picnic to the nearby forest. She was accompanied by an entourage, but Sona did not go with them, feigning indisposition. Actually, there was nothing wrong with her. She had been waiting for an opportunity to try out the queen's clothes and ornaments. She thought, now was the time to carry out her wish. That is how she decided to excuse herself from the picnic.

Sona did not lose any time before she sneaked into the queen's room, opened her wardrobe and pulled out whatever items she needed. After adorning herself to her satisfaction, she stood before the mirror, turning this way and that, and admiring herself and her beauty.

She suddenly saw a shadow in the mirror and turned to face a

handsome young man. He stood enraptured at the sight of Sona Roopa. "Who are you?" he asked her. "You look like a princess. Which kingdom are you from?"

"I am Mandakini the princess of Mangalapuri," Sona responded without any hesitation. "And who are you, by the way?"

"I'm Prince Udayavarma. I've just come back from the *gurukul* after completing my studies. I'm really struck by our beauty. I wish to marry you, and shall formally make a proposal to your parents."

Sona Roopa realised that the prince had believed every word of her lie; if she were to reveal the truth, he might decide not to marry her. "O Prince! Please forgive me. What I told you was not the truth. I'm just a maid here. I merely wished to adorn myself in the queen's clothes and ornaments. I'm sorry I told you a lie without knowing who you are."

Prince Udayavarma, surprisingly, was not cross with her. "Oh! Don't worry. I'm not one to discard a diamond even if I were to pick it from garbage. You may

be a maid here, but I'm willing to marry you," he told Sona smilingly.

"May I ask a question, O Prince?" Sona evidently was not prepared to take him at his word. "Suppose I don't accept your proposal. What'll you do?"

"Do you think a maid will reject a proposal from a prince?" asked Udayavarma. "If she is not willing to marry me, why should I care? I shall find someone else, equally beautiful, and marry her!"

"Kindly bear with me, O Prince!" responded Sona Roopa.



"I'm already engaged to someone else. You were a bit late in asking for my hand!"

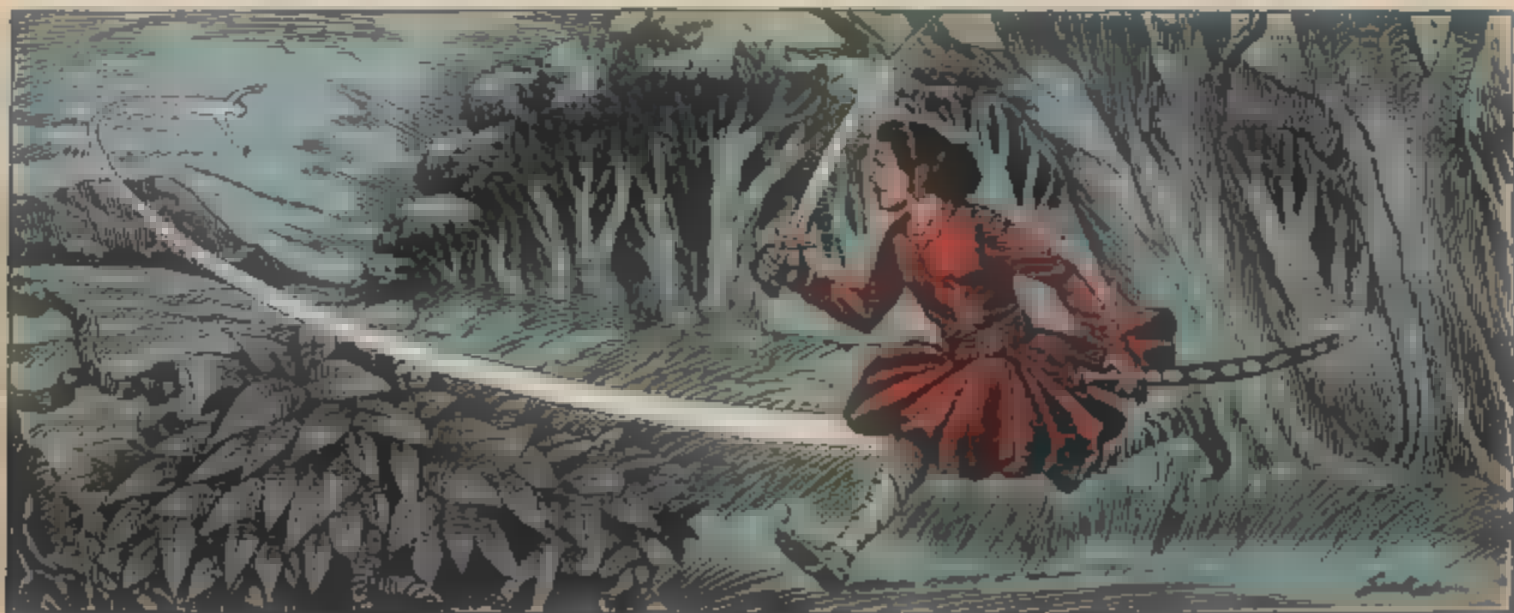
Sona Roopa soon afterwards left the palace, went back home, married Ramesh, and lived happily with him.

The vampire concluded the narration there and asked King Vikramaditya, "O King! Right from the beginning, Sona Roopa had wanted to marry only ■ prince. When she got an opportunity, why didn't she make ■ of it? Prince Udayavarma was willing to marry her even though she was only a maid and not ■ princess. Why did she then decide to marry Ramesh? If you don't answer me to my satisfaction, beware, your head will be blown to pieces!"

Vikramaditya had ■ ready answer. "It's true Sona very

much desired to marry a prince. That's why she curtly dismissed Ramesh when he proposed to her. She did get ■ chance to marry a prince. But she decided to test him and asked that question to Udayavarma. His answer prompted her to reject his proposal, too. He ■ prepared to search for someone else if Sona would not marry him. She knew that he ■ not sincere and might do ■ he suggested. She remembered what Ramesh had told her, that he would not marry anyone other than Sona Roopa. Ramesh was more sincere and would, therefore, be ■ better husband."

The vampire realised that King Vikramaditya had outsmarted him once again. He flew back to the ancient tree taking the corpse with him. The king drew his sword and went after the vampire.





VEER HANUMAN

25

(Ravana sends his commanders one after another to meet the Vanara army in battle; but every one of them—Dhoomraksha, Vajradamshtra, Ahamba—dies fighting. Ravana's anger knows no bounds. He then orders his Commander-in-Chief to go and annihilate the Vanaras. Prahastha, too, is not able to withstand the might of the Vanaras and their leaders. Ravana now decides to lead the Lanka army himself.)

A fierce fight ensued when Ravana's Commander-in-Chief, Prahastha, led an army to attack the Vanaras. There was heavy loss of life on both sides. Prahastha had four Rakshasa warriors ■ second-in-command. Between them they killed many Vanaras. The Vanaras realised that Prahastha was very different

from the other commanders who ■ earlier fought with them. Dwatiya could not contain himself when he saw his soldiers falling ■ the battlefield one after the other. He rushed to their aid, and managed to kill one of the four Rakshasas, Narantaka. Another one called Sambandh met with his end at the hands



of Jambavan, while Tara killed Kumbhaharna. When the fourth Rakshasa warrior saw all three of his companions being killed, he lost his morale and became an easy prey to the Vanara leaders.

Prahastha was quite angry. He went headlong into the Vanara army, when Neela engaged him in combat. The arrows sent by Prahastha were cleverly deflected by Neela with the help of tree branches. Neela slowly approached the Rakshasa's chariot and managed to kill the horse with a huge branch, and also break Prahastha's bow. Prahastha then

aimed a blow at Neela with his fist, when Neela succeeded in catching hold of his head between his arms and strangled him. That was the end of Prahastha. The Rakshasa soldiers took to their heels, much to the relief and joy of the Vanaras.

Ravana was dumbfounded when he heard of the death of Prahastha. "What! My Commander, who had saved my kingdom from several enemies, has been killed by monkeys? I can't believe it! It's not that easy for anybody to defeat him," he said unbelievably. "I think I'd better go for a fight myself." Ravana got into a chariot and rode to the battle-ground. He was accompanied by several Rakshasa soldiers.

The Vanaras were now unnerved. Rama asked Vibhishana to identify the Rakshasas. In the forefront was Ravana's son, Indrajit; another son Akambanda. Then there were Atikaya, Mahoda, Pirasau, Sreesoor, Kumbha, and Nikunda. Vibhishana also told Rama of their individual strength.

The moment Rama saw Ravana for the first time, he even

then decided to punish him for his heinous act of abducting his wife, Sita. Could Ravana be so arrogant just because he had received blessings from Lord Brahma that he would never get killed? Rama thought. Lakshmana's hands were itching to cut off Ravana's hands and legs. He had kidnapped his brother's wife and, therefore, should be given exemplary punishment, Lakshmana decided.

Ravana scared the Vanaras in front of him and moved forward. Sugriva approached him to block his movement. Ravana shot an arrow that felled Sugriva. Kavaya, Rishada, Kavayaksha, Jyotirmukha, and other Vanaras sent a shower of stones on Ravana, but they did not fall on him, he sent arrows after arrows to break the stones.

Rama now decided that he should himself meet Ravana. But Lakshmana intervened and told him that he would go and attack Ravana. Rama sent him after asking him to be very careful. When Hanuman saw Lakshmana setting out to fight with Ravana, he rushed and stood before Ravana, shouting, "Ravana, you're going to die at my hands!"



"You Hanuman? You may give me one beating and earn a name, I don't mind!" said Ravana arrogantly. "But remember, I won't allow you to beat me a second time, because you may not be alive for a second chance!"

"Do you have that much strength in you, Ravana?" asked Hanuman with a sneer. "Then I would like to see that. Mind you, it is I who killed your son, Akshaykumar."

Ravana did not wait for another moment. He aimed a blow at Hanuman's chest which, to Hanuman, was like a breeze.



Hanuman in turn dealt a blow on Ravana's shoulders and sent him reeling. A cry of joy arose from the Vanaras, watching the fight between the two.

Ravana's ire rose when he saw Hanuman undaunted. He inflicted another blow on Hanuman's chest. He was taken aback by it quite hard.

Ravana then turned to Neela. He sent several arrows at him. Neela caught hold of a large piece of rock and hurled it at Ravana, who broke it into pieces with his arrows, much to the surprise of Neela. The two fought relentlessly.

One arrow from Ravana made Neela fall down unconscious.

Ravana then moved forward to meet Lakshmana. "Come on, you the ruler of Lanka!" Lakshmana greeted him. "You must have got tired of our friends, the Vanaras, isn't it? That's why you now wish to engage me. All right, let's test who's stronger!"

"Mind you, Lakshmana," responded Ravana, "when you're welcoming me, you're really welcoming Death!"

"Remember, O Ravana!" it was Lakshmana's turn to snub him. "Self-praise is not a virtue. For Rakshasas, you may be mighty. But I know your actual strength. You may exhibit that."

The two rained arrows at each other. Ravana's arrow made Lakshmana swoon and fall to the ground. Ravana was about to carry Lakshmana to his chariot when Hanuman rushed forward and hit him hard on the chest. Ravana fell down with a thud. He was panting and his tongue came out. Hanuman carried Lakshmana to where Rama was standing.

Rama was expecting to see Lakshmana come back victorious. The sight of him being

brought by Hanuman made him anxious. "Lakshmana! Is it to see you in such a state that I took all this trouble? What happened to you, my dear brother? You were such a brave warrior! Has Ravana taken birth only to destroy our dynasty? Why should I alone remain alive if you're not to be with me? No, I won't survive if anything were to happen to you!" Rama wailed uncontrollably.

Both Hanuman and Vibhishana tried to console him. "Nothing has happened to Lakshmana; he has only fainted. He would regain consciousness in no time. Please don't worry." Still Rama was not hopeful. He kept on looking at Lakshmana's face, watching for any movement or expression. Fortunately, Lakshmana woke up soon much to Rama's relief.

By that time, Ravana too was back on his feet, and got ready to continue the fight. Rama went forward to take him on. Hanuman went to him and whispered, "You may sit on my shoulder and fight. You can then be level with the enemy."

Rama accepted Hanuman's advice and climbed on to his



shoulders, and had now the same height as Ravana standing in his chariot. Ravana aimed his arrows at Hanuman. Rama was annoyed. After all, Hanuman was not fighting and was unarmed. Rama sent a powerful arrow which killed Ravana's charioteer and the two horses. Another arrow brought down the canopy with Lanka's flag on it. A third arrow damaged the wheels of the chariot. He followed it up with yet another arrow which went and pierced Ravana's broad chest. He swayed for a while and fell down inside the chariot which by then crumpled to



the ground.

Ravana did not give up. As he tried to get back ■■ his feet, Rama aimed an arrow at Ravana's crown which flew off his head. "Ravana, you're now unarmed," said Rama. "I shall not fight with anyone unarmed. That's against my principle. You may stop fighting for today. We shall meet again tomorrow". Ravana ■■■ put to shame; with a crestfallen face he went back to his palace, walking all the way.

Rama and Lakshmana made all arrangements for taking care of the Vanara soldiers wounded

and maimed. They went round the place ■■■ attended on them and consoled them. Meanwhile, Ravana ■■■ unable to reconcile himself to his shameless defeat on the battlefield. He was determined to see to the end of Rama and decided that his brother, Kumbhakarna, would be the best person to carry out his plans. He sent his soldiers to bring Kumbhakarna to him.

As usual, Kumbhakarna was deep in slumber. He had gone to sleep ■ week before the battle for Lanka started. Ravana's soldiers prepared themselves to wake up Kumbhakarna. They carried sandalwood paste to apply on his body, plenty of garlands to adorn him with, and a variety of food for him to eat. When they neared his palace, they could hear his loud snore and found the palace itself shaking. They approached him trembling.

The problem was, how to wake him up—which was not that easy. He might wake up with hunger and thirst. So, they placed all kinds of meat preparations and cups and cups of honey in front of him. Then they poked him with their staffs from all



sides. There was no sign of Kumbhakarna waking up.

The soldiers then climbed on to his body and walked up and down his chest, hands and legs. They made all sorts of shrill noises with conches. Kumbhakarna was not disturbed by any of these exercises. They hammered him with heavy sticks and pestles. That also did not have any effect on him. Later, they led elephants and horses on him and made them stamp on his body. Now he showed signs of waking up. He slowly sat up and the first thing he saw was the food lined up before him. He ate everything with great relish and drank all the honey in the cups. It was then that he noticed the soldiers around him. "Why did you wake me up? Has anything happened?" he asked them.

The soldiers were still trem-

bling. Then, one of Ravana's ministers, Yupaksha, replied, "O Prince! We are faced with a grave situation. Sreerama has besieged Lanka and he has brought a huge Vanara army. One of the Vanaras killed Akshaykumar. Most of our commanders have been killed in battle. Rama managed to disarm our king and sent him back in a shameless state. So he has sent for you."

Kumbhakarna was very angry when he heard all these details. "What! Don't tell me that a mere human being has wrought all this havoc on my brave brother. I shall annihilate this man, Rama and his men. Let him first go and meet my brother. I shall then proceed to the battlefield. I'll see that our enemy is brought before my brother and made to fall at his feet."

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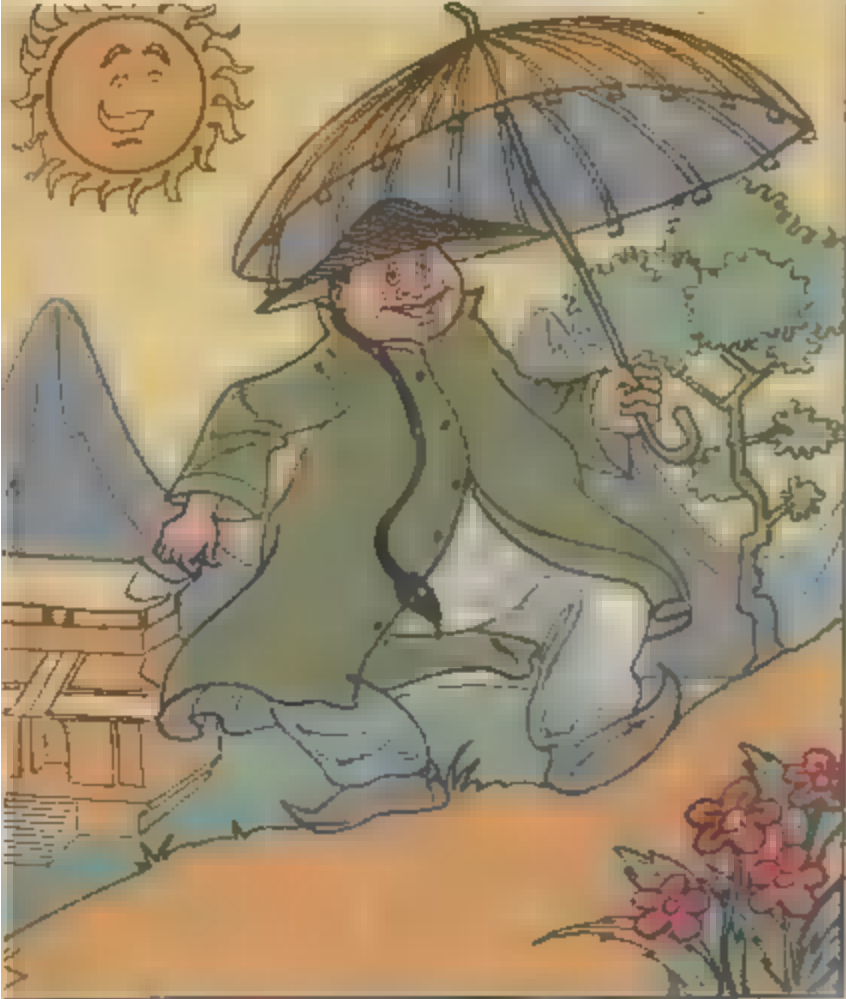
THE FORTUNATE FROGGY



Long ago, in a hamlet on the outskirts of a kingdom, there lived a farmer. He was a little man with a big round face, a rounder belly, beady eyes, flaring nostrils, and a large mouth. People often called him Master Froggy, for, he looked like a frog. But he was witty and had a ready tongue. In fact, the villagers held him in respect because they believed he could predict the future.

It so happened that his wife had a pair of rather peculiar legs. Their condition varied with the change of the weather. By and by, Kuang, for that was Froggy's real name, found that he could forecast the weather with the help of his wife's legs. When they ached then it meant it was going to be overcast. When they swelled, he expected heavy rain; so on and so forth.

One fine sunny morning, when



there was not ■ speck of cloud in the blue sky, Kuang put on his raincoat, held his umbrella, and was ready to set out for work.

“Have you gone off your head?” shouted his wife. “Putting on your raincoat when the sun is raining fire! Oh, how my legs have swelled! It’s almost unbearable!”

“Ah! Ah!” he chuckled. “Didn’t you say your legs had swelled? We are soon going to have a real rain.”

On the way, his friends laughed at him, saying, “Is something really wrong with you,

old Kuang, for you’re sporting ■ raincoat under ■ burning sun?”

Kuang smiled and nodded.

Not before long, black clouds covered the sky. Gusts of wind blew. Lightning flashed, thunder rolled, and it began to rain heavily. Everyone got drenched and were cold. Except, of course, old Kuang!

One day, when the sky was overcast with cloud, he asked his wife, “Dear, have your legs swelled?”

“Why should they? They feel fine!” was the reply.

So, Kuang went out without his raincoat, whereas everyone else had it on. But soon the sky got clear and the sun shone brightly.

People really began to wonder and asked him how he could forecast so correctly.

“I just ■■■■ to know,” was his casual reply. For, it would have been rather embarrassing to reveal the secret link between his wife’s legs and the weather.

People believed that he had powers to predict the future. The village folks began consulting him whenever they were in difficulty.



Once a young lady lost her ring and went to him. Kuang pretended to contemplate and then said, "Look for it around the stove and the washing place."

Surprisingly, she found it there. Old Kuang had just made a guess!

One day ■ worried wife came to him. "My husband is away for ■ long time and there is no word from him since he left. Please tell me when he will return," she pleaded with him.

Kuang closed his eyes, mumbled some abracadabra and said, "Good lady, do not worry, he will surely return within this

month."

Only a week had passed when the long-awaited husband returned home. Kuang knew that he would, as his wife was expecting ■ baby that month.

His fame spread far and wide. But he did not earn anything from this practice. For, those who came to him were the poor villagers, friends and relatives.

But soon fortune smiled on him.

One day, a priceless gem disappeared from the palace treasury. The emperor ordered his men to look for it. They tried hard, but in vain, for it had been stolen by



none other than the treasurer himself!

No one ever suspected him. But the impatient emperor summoned him to his presence. The treasurer stood before him trembling. "Had he been found out?" he wondered.

"Since you are in a way responsible for the loss of the treasure, I give you four days to look for a good diviner who can locate the gem. Now make haste. If you fail you'll lose everything," said the emperor very angrily.

The treasurer lost no time in setting out on his mission. Soon,

he and his men went to the house of a fortune-teller. The treasurer took the man aside and asked him in a whisper if he knew how to predict well.

"Certainly. Whatever I've foretold to this day has always come true," was the reply.

"Then we do not require your service," said the treasurer to himself and rode away with his men.

He then went to all the diviners in the kingdom. Naturally, they claimed themselves to be very successful ones. But the treasurer did not dare to ask any of them to come with him.

Only half a day was left. Someone informed him about Kuang. He rushed to his village, found him, and blurted out his question, "Can you predict well?"

Startled that an important official from the king's court was before him, he replied rather nervously, "No sir, I just have the habit of fooling my friends."

"Fine. Then you're the right man I'm looking for. The emperor has lost a luminous gem. You've to locate it for him," said the treasurer with a satisfied

smile.

"Sir, I dare not go, for I don't make good predictions," pleaded Kuang, scared out of his wits, thinking of the great risk to be a clairvoyant for the emperor.

"If you foretell well, then I don't want you," replied the treasurer.

"In that case, Sir, I do predict well," said Kuang. He heard the painful groans of his wife. "You see, it's going to rain today," he said.

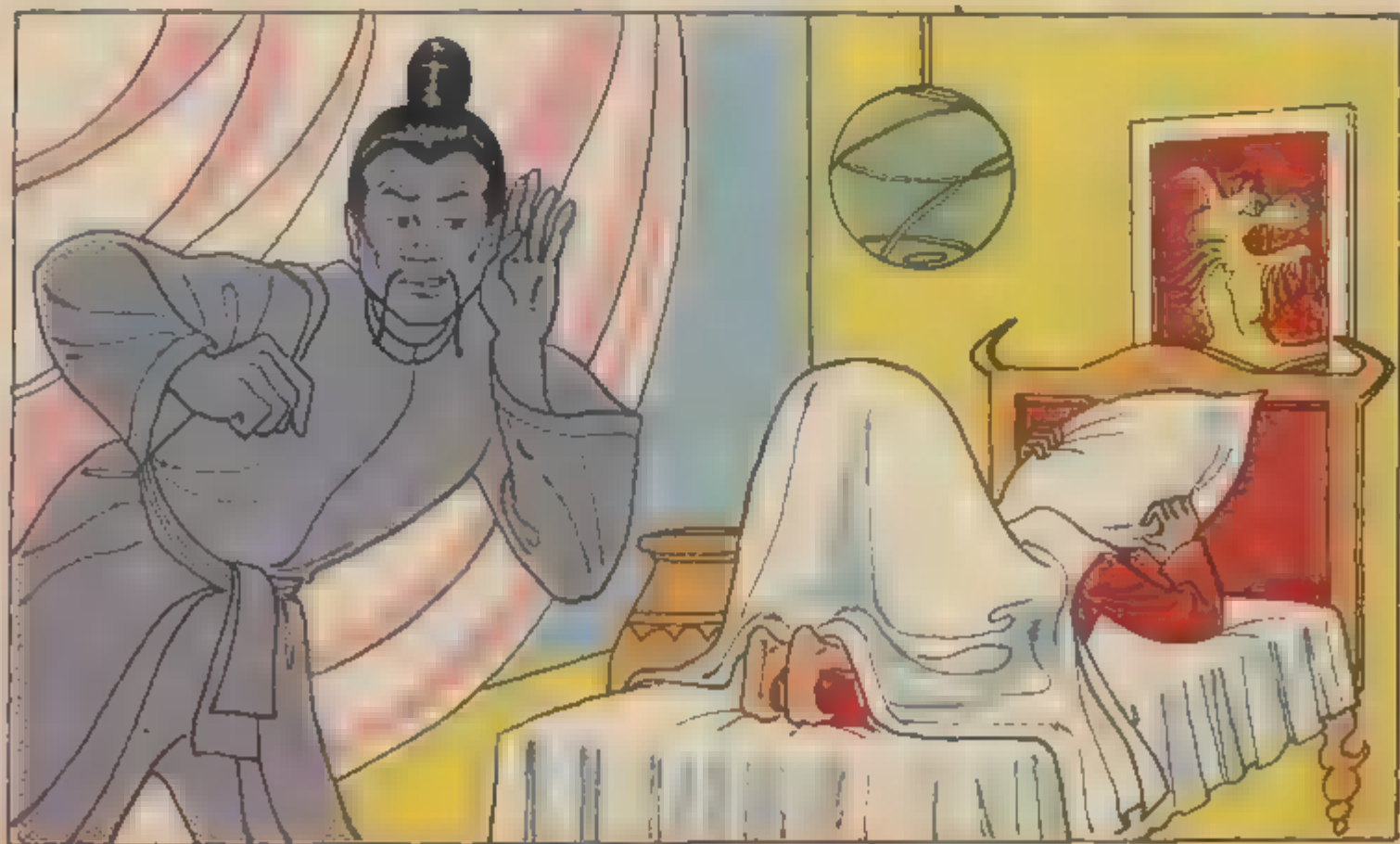
"Ha ha! Rain, when there isn't a shred of cloud! I understand what kind of diviner you are. You've to come with me," said

the treasurer vehemently.

So Kuang bid farewell to his wife and instructed her what she should do if he failed to return within three days, and accompanied the treasurer.

At night, when he was about to retire in one of the palace guest-rooms, he cursed the thief aloud in his anguish. "You wretched fellow, how dare you steal from the emperor's treasury?" Then, addressing himself, he said, "You're going to die, you poor chap!"

Just then the treasurer was eavesdropping. In fact, he was about to go to bed, happy that





tomorrow Kuang would fail in his task and the emperor in his rage would put the poor villager to death and he would be safe... when, suddenly, he heard the pelting sound of rain.

He almost missed a heart-beat. "So, he knew how to predict, after all!" thought the treasurer.

That was why he had made his way to where Kuang was put up. And he heard what Kuang said!

"He must have surely me me," he thought, trembling in his shoes. "But how did he know that I here here?"

He rushed into the room and

fell at Kuang's feet. "Have mercy on me. I'll confess everything."

Both baffled and shocked, Kuang gathered himself and said, "Be calm. All will be well."

"You're a real clairvoyant. I'm the culprit. I've hidden the gem in the nest of the woodpecker high up on the trunk of the great oak in the royal garden. I'll give you a thousand gold pieces, but please save me," frantically pleaded the treasurer.

"All right," agreed Kuang.

The next day Kuang was presented before the emperor in the royal court. He bowed, closed his eyes, and contemplated. "Is there ■ great oak in the garden, Your Majesty?" he calmly asked after a while.

"Yes, indeed there is ■ great oak, a thousand years old," replied the emperor, pleased. "But where is my precious gem?"

"High up in the trunk of that tree is a woodpecker's nest. In it lies your precious gem, O Emperor!" replied Kuang, with ■ sudden flair.

The emperor at once started for the garden followed by his retinue. Someone was made to climb up to the nest and the lost

treasure ■ recovered.

"But who stole it?" enquired the emperor, eager to punish the thief.

Kuang closed his eyes ■ again, mumbled ■ few words ■ said, while all waited in pin-drop silence.

"Your Excellency, this luminous gem is the soul of ■ your material wealth. It comes from the elements and has in it the very essence of the sun, the moon, the stars, and the planets. Therefore, O Lord, it has the unique power to move itself."

"Is that so?" said the emperor, his mouth agape, while the treasurer heaved a sigh of relief.

So Kuang ■ showered with gifts of gold, silver, and precious stones. But he was not granted permission to leave the kingdom. For, the emperor thought of having the services of his unusual talents as long as he lived.

But the poor farmer was rather anxious to get home. He had, in fact, instructed his wife to set fire to their house and go to her parents' home if he failed ■ return within three days.

So early in the morning of the fourth day, he went to the



emperor, managed to squeeze a few drops of tears out of his eyes and said, "Your Majesty, I feel my house is on fire. Please permit me to go home."

How could he know that his house ■ on fire so many miles away? He ■ not allowed to go, but ■ official ■ to check if what he said ■ true. The official soon returned and confirmed that Kuang's house ■ indeed on fire.

Overjoyed, the emperor at once honoured Kuang with a title. "You're ■ true diviner. You're appointed henceforth

Adviser to the Emperor in all Affairs of the State. You'll stay here in a mini palace."

The farmer was in ■ soup. "Your Majesty," he pleaded, "I'm most unsuited for such a high order of life. Pardon me, I cannot accept your offer."

"All right," said the emperor, "if you can tell me what is there in this box before the incense burns out, then you'll be free."

Kuang was in a real dilemma. How on earth can he guess what was there in the box? The joss-stick was rapidly getting shorter.

In utter desperation he at last sighed aloud, "O poor Froggy! You're trapped!"

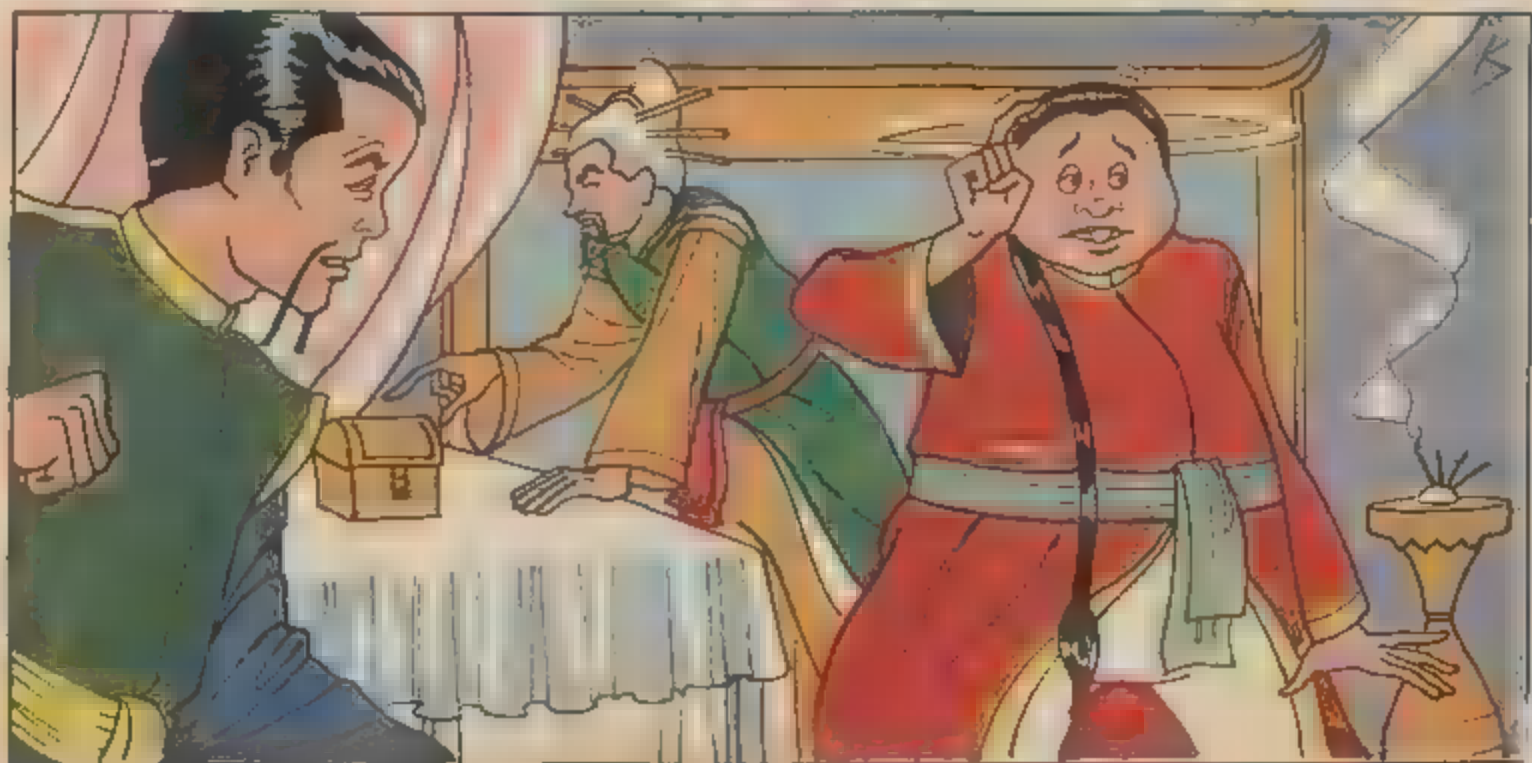
The emperor stood up in disbelief! The box was opened

and in it sat ■ golden frog, inlaid with precious stones.

But Kuang the farmer had only blurted out in exasperation his own nickname. He gathered himself and bowing to the emperor said, "O Lord, with the setting of the sun today, I'll lose my power to predict. It was only given to ■■ for five years. Today, unfortunately, is the last day of the fifth year."

So Kuang managed to return home. He built a new house where, along with his wife, he lived happily ever after. His wife was finally cured of her leg ailment and it was not unusual to see the farmer coming home all drenched.

—Retold by Anup Kishore ■■



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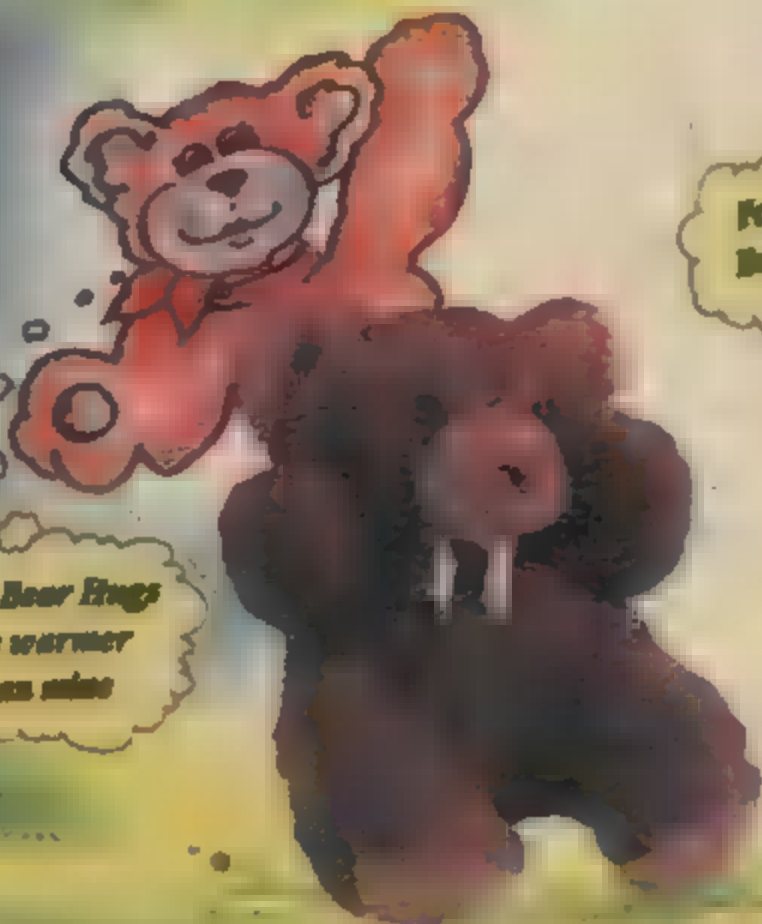
Don't you owe the



See my tail
It's out of a
Fairy Tale



Nice 'n' funny
I'm a Bunny



Fairy is my name
But I'm ob-so tame



Thank
you

Give little one a cuddles!



Give the
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a Handa



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soft 'n' nice



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But I'm a treat



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—*Napoleon Bonaparte*

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—*Adolphe Thiers*

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